



# LEGEND OF THE GREAT SAINT

BOOK 03  
FLESH  
FROM BONES

*Dream Teller*

EPUB CREATION BY LISA HAYES

# Legend of the Great Saint

(大圣传)

by

**Dream Teller**

(说梦者)

# Synopsis

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Among the demons, the supreme ones are called “Great Saints.”

A young man leaves his mountain village, treading far and wide under the heavens, striding step by step into legend, becoming a myth.

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# Book 03 - *Flesh From Bones*

# Chapter 103

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The pond water became a stormy rain as it fell. A rainbow ring formed under the sunlight's shine.

Li Qingshan's eyes were tightly shut, his expression solemn. The monster core restrained its entire aura and continuously sank down inside his body, resembling a spirit turtle shrinking back into its shell, submerging into the abysses of a sea trench, entering a hibernation extending to thousands of years, unperceived by anyone, its existence becoming legend.

Li Qingshan once again opened his eyes and jumped to the lake shore. By the time he'd come in front of Little An, he'd turned once again into that Li Qingshan from before. Saying it like this was perhaps inaccurate.

Because he currently didn't have bulging muscles with clear outlines anymore. He didn't have the hard-edged temperament either, anything outstanding about his person entirely hidden and understated. He was just like an ordinary mountain villager at first glance, without anything exceptional or peculiar about him any longer. There was merely a tranquil profoundness in the depths of his eyes.

He looked at his own pair of human hands and suddenly remembered that he was already sixteen years old.

His concept of time became blurred when he led the existence of a monster. It only became distinct once more all of a sudden after the recovery of his human form.

He'd come to this world for sixteen years. The experience he'd gone through during this half-year was more spectacular than even the fifteen years and a half before that all added together. From a human to a monster, and from a monster again to a human.

His entire monster qi had been curbed inside that monster core,



not leaking out in the slightest. Even other cultivators would have no way to find out he was actually a monster. It was funny and ironic that he'd recovered everything of a human after comprehending the genuine dao of monsters and demons.

There were untold multitudes of creatures in the world. Why were humans unable to cultivate into monsters against all expectations? Then again, a cat who cultivated into a monster was called a cat monster, a tiger cultivating into a monster was called a tiger monster. What would a man cultivating into a monster be called? [A manster](#)?

A joke totally lost in translation I couldn't find an equivalent of. A "man monster," 人妖, is slang for a crossdresser, an effeminate homosexual, a ladyboy, a transsexual, something like that.

A burst of evil chills burst through Li Qingshan. He decided not to think about this issue anymore. He called Little An, "I've made you wait. We can depart!"

A happy brilliance ignited inside Little An's eye sockets. He snuggled against Li Qingshan.

Li Qingshan then took out that Sumeru ring the green bull had left for him. He had no idea what material it was made of. It was limpid and translucent, but it didn't expose any spiritual light. Now his entire true qi had melted into monster qi and been repressed, so he simply couldn't open this item. Although he was very curious what the green bull had truly left for him, he could only endure for now and slowly think of a way in the future. He tied the finger ring and treated it like a necklace, hanging it on his neck and hiding it beneath his clothes.

He touched in passing that locust wooden plaque charred black. "Let's go. Rather than those far distant goals, let's first help you recover a human body. However now you have to hide again." Li Qingshan remembered at all times the duties he'd taken responsibility for toward this child. It was Little An who would do

his best to lend him a hand at every critical juncture. He didn't leave and didn't give up even in the most dangerous of times.

Li Qingshan wouldn't say grateful words, he would merely store these emotions in the bottom of his heart. Moreover the ties and the feelings between them had long ago gone beyond trivial gratitude.

He lifted his head and watched the rainbow. One silhouette after another emerged in his mind. The green bull, Little An, Gu Yanying, Halfmoon. These expectations, these pledges, these wild hopes, he would achieve them one by one.

The mountain forest once again recovered its quietness. The deep pool no longer swirled into whirlpools; it had been thoroughly pacified by Li Qingshan's monster power.

This sixteen years old youngster combining the better aspects from the two monster and human races once again stepped into the world of humans. How many dangers would he be able to brave past once more, how many stormy waves would he pacify?

Li Qingshan carried Little An and came to the destroyed ruins of the Black Wind Camp. He couldn't help but frown.

Since he was going to return to the world of mankind, he naturally couldn't do without yellow gold and white silver paving the way for him. Moreover, those silver notes he had on him had been destroyed by the blaze during the mountain temple battle and could no longer be used.

He had then remembered that wealth left inside the Black Wind Camp and rejoiced at his own foresight back then. But he'd then come to have a look and discovered traces of excavation everywhere.

The secret room under Xiong Xiangwu's bedroom had also been dug open as expected. The things inside had naturally been cleaned out.



Li Qingshan took a deep breath in. “What’s this about, [Tomb Raider](#)?”

The original text says Gold Stealing Officers instead of Tomb Raider. The “Gold Stealing Officers” was a sect of grave robbers toward the end of the Han dynasty, allegedly established by Cao Cao to fund his armies during the era of the Three Kingdoms.

Inside Suncheer City, a wildly happy Ye Dachuan was madly kissing a transfer order. “Haha, I can finally leave this damned place!”

Leveling Black Wind Camp. Also putting down the Dragon Gate Sect as one of the local evil forces, treating it as his merit. The report went to the Clear River capital, and after layer upon layer of thorough audits, it was sent to the lord prefect’s desk.

Even the lord prefect was a little astonished that Ye Dachuan could achieve things like these. Moreover he couldn’t resist his beloved concubine’s bout of pillow talks either. Finally he approved a transfer order, moving Ye Dachuan away from Suncheer City.

Of course, it was impossible if he were to think about going back and stir troubles in the Clear River capital, but he still managed to be transferred to the most prosperous place inside a radius of several hundred miles, Blessed Peace City. How could Ye Dachuan not be wild with joy.

The adviser said, “Congratulation master, congratulations master!”

Ye Dachuan rejoiced for a while, then said sadly, “My poor brother Qingshan!” He could still be said to be someone who didn’t forgot those who dug the well when he drank from it.

The adviser said with a sigh, “My lord please restrain your sorrow. All of this is fate, no one can go against it!”

Ye Dachuan thought a while and very quickly walked out from

these shadows. “Don’t forget to burn a lot of paper money before departure and let my brother Qingshan properly bribe the ghost messengers, so that he can live a good life in the netherworld and be sent into a good family in his next life.”

“Sent into what good family?” Li Qingshan climbed past the wall with a strange complexion, falling inside the yard.

“Of course a great wealthy... Great ghost!” Ye Dachuan had casually replied. His voiced had gradually slowed down and he’d looked at the newcomer’s face, then finally cried in alarm. Like a whisper of smoke, he hid behind the adviser’s chair.

The adviser said, “My lord, calm down, calm down, what ghost would there be in broad daylight. It’s constable Li who came back!”

Ye Dachuan threw a glance at Li Qingshan. He saw the glorious summertime sun drag a long long shadow under Li Qingshan’s feet. Only then did he sigh in relief and drill out from behind the adviser’s chair. He grabbed Li Qingshan’s hand: “Brother Qingshan, you actually came back. Where have you gone during all this time?” His eyes brimmed with tears as he spoke on.

Li Qingshan pulled his hand out and said, “I suffered a little injury and went into closed door cultivation in the mountains for a while. Did you think me dead?”

Ye Dachuan said, “It’s all good if you’re alive, all good if alive!” Then he told him the full story soon after. It turned out the news about Feng Zhang taking a bunch of first-grade masters to besiege Li Qingshan had spread out like wildfire. In the end everyone had disappeared from inside the mountains.

There had been quite a few people searching in the mountains during these few months, but they all merely found a mountain temple burned to ashes. There had been simply no way to tell who the broken bones left behind belonged to, hence rumors sprang up in every corner.

Some said Feng Zhang had killed people and silenced them for good after snatching the spirit ginseng, then gone into hiding. There were also some who said that another master had acted and killed everyone.

But Li Qingshan was a dead man no matter which rumor it was. No one believed he could survive in such circumstances, therefore everyone regarded him as dead. But they hadn't thought that Li Qingshan would actually truly walk out from inside the mountains, and the only one to walk out of the mountains at that.

"It's all the better since you came back. It just happens you can follow me to Blessed Peace. Look, what do you think this?" Ye Dachua proudly patted the transfer order, his fat face smiling until his eyes were about to disappear. He was happy from the bottom of his heart that Li Qingshan was able to return. Li Qingshan was his lucky star general.

Li Qingshan said in an odd tone as soon as he saw the transfer order, "County commissioner? Isn't that even half a grade lower."

Usually a small county city didn't have a county commissioner. Only the big ones did, some even had two or three of them. They stood under the county magistrate, and naturally couldn't compare to the power of a county magistrate who was the one who monopolized the final say.

Ye Dachuan said, "That's something you don't know. It's better to beg for food in a golden lair rather than be called king in a doghouse. What profit is there in a lousy place like Suncheer City? And if you earn money, you can't find any pleasure house to drink with women in even if you wanted to..."

Li Qingshan couldn't help but laugh despite himself when he heard county magistrate Ye yak about wining, whoring, and gambling. But inside it actually gave him a little more of the feeling he'd genuinely returned to the human world. Perhaps it could be said to be vulgar, but weren't these things precisely what mankind

pursued?

The three words Blessed Peace City actually stirred his heart. He touched the iron wolf badge in his bosom. That Red Eagle captain “Old Wang” once said to go to Blessed Peace City and report to Zhuo Zhibo if he could live on, and then he could become an Eagle Wolf guard. But he hadn’t entirely thought this matter through and couldn’t make a decision for the moment.

No one could be sure that the Feng Zhang he’d done in wouldn’t have some colleagues and old friends in Blessed Peace City. The Zhuo Zhibo who’d sent Feng Zhang to Suncheer City wouldn’t necessarily have a good opinion of him either.

The adviser was indeed worthy of being the adviser. Although he wasn’t aware of that much inside information, he still thought of this and warned Ye Dachuan, “That Feng Zhang who didn’t put anyone in his eyes came precisely from Blessed Peace City. Moreover we haven’t found his whereabouts yet, even now. It’s hard to guarantee the Eagle Wolf Guard won’t investigate.”

Ye Dachuan’s expression also changed. “That’s right, brother Qingshan you have to be even more careful. Or else you better flee and we’ll pretend none of us saw you come back.” With his status, he still didn’t know the news about Feng Zhang being fired by Wang Pushi face to face. The disappearance of an Eagle Wolf guard, that was a matter of major concern.

Li Qingshan said, “Many thanks for my lord’s care. But there’s actually no need to worry about this matter. I have something I wish to consult for advice?”

“What?”

Li Qingshan said, “Who dug the Black Wind Camp?” It was impossible such a great amount of work hadn’t stirred any news about its activity. He couldn’t lack money no matter where he went. One had to pay some price for plucking hair from the tiger’s ass.

Ye Dachuan said, “It’s, it’s the Iron Fist Gate who took people there. Qingshan don’t be impulsive.”

“There’s actually nothing to be impulsive about. I’ll just ask my money back, would they dare refuse?” Li Qingshan was a little curious about Ye Dachuan’s attitude. He was the one who’d leveled the Black Wind Camp and the Dragon Gate Sect, would the Iron Fist Gate still dare to make things difficult for him?

Ye Dachuan said, “I heard a protector recently came to the Iron Fist Gate, apparently it’s to investigate hall master Wu’s whereabouts. Liu Hong excavated these things precisely to show respect and give him presents. I heard it’s also an innate master, maybe not so good to deal with.”

Li Qingshan said, “I’ll be careful.” He disappeared outside the walls as soon as his voice fell. He crossed over roof tiles after roof tiles and arrived inside the Iron Fist Gate. He wasn’t in a rush to make an appearance however, but bent his ears and listened carefully.

After he’d repressed his monster qi and transformed into a human shape, his [five senses and six consciousnesses](#) all couldn’t compare to when he was in a demon state, but they were still far superior compared to ordinary people. Within a thousand feet, even the sounds of mosquitoes clearly came to his ears. He immediately found Liu Hong’s location.

“Five senses and six consciousnesses” can be understood as merely an expression that means “all the senses,” but if you’re curious the six consciousnesses, or six viññāṇa (yes I had to google the term :P), are Buddhist concepts derived from the six base senses recognized in Buddhism: eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind.

Hundreds of children stood tidily and neatly in the the martial training field lighted by a dazzling sun hanging high above. They stepped forward one by one.

# Chapter 104

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An old man with a goatee and wearing a long ocher gown took their pulse one by one. He shook his head from time to time, nodded from time to time, or raised and lowered their hands from time to time. On his left was Liu Hong, and behind him stood Dragon Li, ready to replenish his tea at any time.

A crowd of Iron Fist Gate disciples formed a human wall, keeping many people outside the human wall, whether male or female, young or old. They were seemingly these children's relatives, all anxiously watching their own children. They beamed from ear to ear if they could obtain the old man's nod. They hung their heads crestfallen when the old man shook his head.

This was a great figure come thousand miles away from Clear River City, a solemn protector of the Iron Fist Gate with exceedingly wonderful martial arts. Their children could truly reach the sky in a single step if they could obtain his approval.

Li Qingshan had seen the old man with a single glance. This old man had a dense aura all around him, a tad stronger than Feng Zhang. He was indeed an innate master, but he wasn't any dangerous character. He was confident he could kill this old man in a single move if he were to transform into monster form. It wouldn't be too much trouble even if he were to maintain his human form either, he would merely need to spend some effort.

He was only curious about what they were doing.

Liu Hong sat beside the old man. The two of them were all elderly people, but even insensible children could tell the disparity in momentum between them. Liu Hong sighed inside. There had truly been quite a few extraordinary characters who'd come to this Suncheer City of late.

Ever since he'd come to this Suncheer City in retirement, he hadn't seen for a great many years this protector Yan, Yan Song.



But then again, with his second-grade talent, he hadn't seen him more than a few times even back in the days. The last time had been at the headquarters' master's birthday feast more than ten years ago. At that time he was still in the prime of his life, while protector Yan already had this same appearance. Now he'd already become an old man, but this protector Yan actually hadn't changed in the slightest.

Liu Hong said, "Protector Yan, better take a little rest!"

"Please have tea!" Dragon Li hurriedly added tea from the side. Hall master Wu had died a violent death, canceling his plans of leaving Suncheer City, but his heart was happy instead. He hadn't liked hall master Wu to begin with, being so rude toward his master. Served him right to die. In the turn of an eye came a protector Yan again, but not only his martial ability was even higher, his manners were also much steadier. He was arrogant but didn't expose it, and he could even directly take him to Clear River City.

Yan Song stopped. He leisurely drank a mouthful of tea. "I'm old, my bones and body are no longer any good." He let these children stand under the sun.

Liu Hong said, "Where is the headquarters' master?"

"Don't worry, you can also be regarded as an elderly of the sect. How would we blame the one named Wu's own uselessness on you. I will make things clear to the headquarters' master." Yan Song's mood wasn't bad. It was of course because he'd gotten quite a few benefits from Liu Hong. He didn't actually care much about the silver, but one of the ancient paintings was from the hand of a famous master. It could even be said to be hard to obtain even with thousand golds, and just happened to match his taste.

Liu Hong said in great delight, "Then I have to give many thanks to the protector. How do your honored self find these children?"

Yan Song said, "There are a few good seedlings among these

children. I don't know whether they can refine qi, but at least it's enough to train in martial arts. Children with decent aptitude would have been cleanly rounded up a long ago if we were in the Clean River capital city. You have to struggle and scramble in order to obtain a good seedling when one appears. How could there be such a casual selection."

Liu Hong said, "It's all due to the headquarters' master's wisdom."

"Hm?"

Yan Song lifted his head at this time. He saw a crack open in the human wall built from Iron Fist Gate disciples. A young man walked in. But he ordered after throwing one glance, "Let him go out. He's too old." Moreover he was also too ordinary; there was fundamentally nothing about him worth his attention.

But the Iron Fist Gate disciples actually didn't obey his words and stop this young man. They split on both sides instead in alarm. Yan Song was somewhat curious. He saw Dragon Li beside him, and even Liu Hong, open their eyes wide: "Li Qingshan!"

The crowd of people was even noisier as they separately discussed, "Isn't this Li Qingshan?" "Black Tiger Li Qingshan!" "Didn't they say he died? How did he come back?" Li Qingshan could also be regarded as a personage of fame inside Suncheer City now.

Li Qingshan walked forward and waved with a smile in greeting. "Gate master Liu, long time no see. This one must be some protector right, it's my honor it's my honor."

Yan Song frowned. He remembered another goal of his current journey, wasn't it precisely for the sake of this young man?

Liu Hong said awkwardly, "You... You came back!"

Li Qingshan went straight to the point and said, "That's right. This time I have to act like an unwelcome guest and invite gate

master Liu to give me a few things. Or else change them into silver notes, I would rather get a little less. After all, it wasn't easy for you to dig it out either." The current Li Qingshan seemed very placid, without any awe-inspiring might or baleful aura.

Liu Hong looked at Yan Song. Yan Song tasted the tea and faintly said, "You're that Li Qingshan? You still dare to come back? Now I'll ask you questions, and you'll give me answers. One less answer will result in one more slap. How did hall master Wu die?"

He didn't even stand up. This wasn't at all someone worth him standing up, and Li Qingshan's "disrespect" had also made him somewhat angry. He must have eaten panther guts and actually dared to ask things from him. Moreover there were a good many signs hall master Wu's death had a great relation with this person, so he naturally wouldn't be polite with an enemy.

Li Qingshan was hiding his strength? Perhaps! But even if Li Qingshan were a first-grade master, or even an innate master who'd reached the realm of qi refining, then what about it? With his strength at the second layer of qi refining, how many people were able to enter his eyes.

Li Qingshan wasn't a stranger to such behavior. This was someone who had absolute confidence in his own strength and believed he could subdue the scene. Everyone had to listen to his arrangements and follow his orders.

After Li Qingshan had seen these characters soaring to the horizon however, he now felt it extremely amusing looking at this appearance of Yan Song's. It was just like a toad shouting in great croaks, gesticulating to and ordering about a bunch of insects and flies, believing itself a king.

Therefore Li Qingshan laughed. At least I can be regarded as a frog, and a very strong one at that.

The corner of Liu Hong's eyes twitched. He hadn't seen this kid as he went out for a stroll for a few months. He originally thought

he'd become a little more subdued, but he hadn't expected he was still the same after coming back. Mild on the surface, but utterly arrogant in his bones.

Yan Song's face became suddenly chilly. "What are you laughing at?"

Li Qingshan said, "I saw something laughable, so of course I'll laugh."

Yan Song slowly stood up and said, "You try laughing again."

Li Qingshan said, "Cut the nonsense. You must have swallowed all my things right, now hurry up and spit them all out."

Yan Song crossed a distance of several feet in one step and came in front of Li Qingshan without any warning. He lifted his hand and fiercely slapped his palm down. He wanted to slap Li Qingshan's face so he would never be able to laugh again in this life, so he would know the price to be paid for provoking the Iron Fist Gate.

"Pa." A crisp and loud slap.

Yan Song's head was slanted to one side, a burst of fleshy waves surging on his old face. His eyes were open wide and round. A tooth flew out. His mind was fully in disbelief. He clearly hadn't sensed the slightest bit of internal strength or true qi on Li Qingshan, but his speed was quick and violent beyond compare against all expectations. Was it possible that he was a body refining master? But looking at him, he didn't have any of the particular momentum of a body refining master.

Li Qingshan had seen Yan Song trying to give him a face slap. He didn't have much anger in his heart, mostly lamenting instead. The originally quick and violent movement was now actually so slow in his eyes, so slow he simply was doubtful whether his own assessment was mistaken or not.

As to Yan Song, he'd exposed quite a few openings because he'd

underestimated the enemy. Li Qingshan would naturally not let them slip by. He hit a slap on Yan Song's face, his smile unchanging. "If you don't spit it out, I'll just hit you until you spit it out."

"Protector Yan!" Liu Hong was dumbfounded. The protector Yan of invincible might had unexpectedly suffered a slap in front of so many people. He was even more surprised Li Qingshan had actually become so strong and fierce. Such a rate of growth was simply too fearsome.

A burst of astonishment also went through the crowd of people. They were willing to come with their families' sons and heirs because Yan Song had exposed genuine skills. He'd exploded a wooden stake more than ten feet thick in one punch. For them it was simply the power of divine immortals.

Dragon Li couldn't resist wiping his eyes clean. Was this really that bull baby from Crouching Bull Village? He felt he was becoming less and less familiar with this fellow villager.

Yan Song's heart was furious. He retreated a step back and adjusted his body. The true qi in his entire body rushed into his pair of fists.

Pa!

How would Li Qingshan give him the opportunity to make a move. He went forward a step as soon as he saw Yan Song's posture and once again hit him with a slap.

How great was Li Qingshan's strength? Yan Song was hit dizzy, and it routed the true qi he'd just assembled. But he wasn't resigned and once again revolved it inside, about to strike at Li Qingshan.

"Pa." The third slap landed down. Empty-handed close combat was just like this; it was very difficult to recover once struck downwind.

“Pa Pa Pa.” The slapping sounds were incomparably crisp and clear, shocking the martial training field. There was no longer any other sound other than the slapping.

Li Qingshan hit Yan Song without the slightest courtesy every single time the latter showed signs of striking back. The reason he chose slaps wasn't simply to pay back a tooth for a tooth, but because he didn't have the intent to kill, hence he couldn't use strong attacks either. Hitting the head was actually the best choice to repress Yan Song downwind. Slaps weren't strong enough to be lethal, while they could also produce dizzying shakes and ruin Yan Song's movements. It was truly the optimal way.

Yan Song retreated back step by step. Li Qingshan advanced step by step.

With a crashing bang, Yan Song sat again on his great [lion chair](#). He shielded his head and face as he shouted, “Stop hitting!” He'd actually woken up from his rage after suffering several slaps and become afraid instead. Li Qingshan could kill him. The older men grew, the more they cherished life.

Li Qingshan indeed took his hand back. “Hand over my things!”

Yan Song's face was sometimes pale white and sometimes flush red. He roared, “Liu Hong! What are you still doing standing there!” But he secretly slipped his hand inside his bosom at the same time. He likewise had talismans he used as trump cards. Losing so much face in front of so many people, he couldn't be a man anymore if he didn't take revenge for this hatred.

Li Qingshan said, “I urge you not to use it!”

Yan Song's hand trembled.

Li Qingshan said, “You wanted to hit my face, so I hit your face. If you want to kill me, then I can only kill you.”

Li Qingshan's words were tranquil and unperturbed. He didn't even stop Yan Song from taking his talisman. Yan Song squeezed



the corner of the talisman, his expression going through an even stronger change. He couldn't take it out anymore for the moment.

Yan Song said, "Is it really... really you who killed hall master Wu, killed those people?" Although there was no way to identify the skeletons, quite a few ruined weapons had seen been found. Hall master Wu's iron gloves were among them.

# Chapter 105

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Li Qingshan faintly smiled in silence, neither admitting nor denying.

Yan Song said, “Dark Wolf guard Feng Zhang also died by your hands?” He would never have believed such a ridiculous thing before, that one Dark Wolf guard, five first-grade masters, together with a great crowd of second-grade and third-grade masters would actually die by the hands of an unknown nobody kid. But now he believed somewhat.

Li Qingshan still didn’t answer.

Yan Song pulled his hand out. There wasn’t any talisman in it.

Li Qingshan said smiling, “Not fighting?”

Yan Song said, “You’re dead for certain, there’s no need for me to waste my things on a dead man.”

Li Qingshan said, “Oh? How do you mean?”

Yan Song said, “Do you believe you can continue to live after killing a Dark Wolf guard?”

Li Qingshan said noncommittal, “This matter doesn’t require your honored elderly self to worry about it. Please hand my things over!”

A fit of pallor crossed over Yan Song’s face. Liu Hong went forward and pulled Li Qingshan to one side, pleading, “Qingshan, I only dug those things out because I didn’t know you were still alive. If you want silver I’ll just give it to you, alright?”

Li Qingshan spread his hands in a shrug and said, “That’s what I wanted from the start.” He wanted to be reasonable with others, however others always had to be unreasonable instead and insisted on talking with fists.

Iron Fist Gate disciples dispersed everyone after a meaningful

look from Liu Hong, emptying such a big martial training field.

Ye Dachuan had caught up at this time, riding on a sedan chair. He obtained a rough understanding of the situation after watching each and everyone's expression, then again seeing the red mark not yet faded from Yan Song's face. He silently thought, delightful. They'd arranged a feast to entertain Yan Song some days ago, but this bird stool protector had acted like he considered everyone else beneath him. Now you've seen our ferociousness right?

He pretended to cough twice. "Does protector Yan have some misunderstanding with constable Li? As the saying goes, it's better to quell enmity rather than keeping it alive. I'll act the host at noon, and be the mediator for the both of you."

Yan Song flatly interrupted, "No need, there's nothing I have to say to a dead man!"

Li Qingshan said, "You say that again!" A loser still dared to be so rampant, do you truly believe I won't dare to be merciless?

Yan Song snorted coldly but indeed didn't dare speak any further. It was precisely the so-called circumstances being stronger than men.

Ye Dachuan said with curiosity, "What dead man?" After understanding the entirety of the matter, he was also indeed starting to worry for Li Qingshan.

Dragon Li said in a small voice, "Qingshan, you better hurry and leave!" Yan Song gave him a cold look.

Li Qingshan laughed coldly inside. You really believe I don't have long to live? He mildly said, "I was actually about to go to Blessed Peace City and join the Eagle Wolf Guard."

"What!" Everyone was stunned.

"What a joke! With just, hmph!" Yan Song started to laugh coldly. He'd wanted to say "With just your skills," but then he remembered Li Qingshan truly had this strength, so he could only

coldly hump in disdain.

Ye Dachuan said, "What's this about?"

Li Qingshan said, "Red Eagle Captain old Wang let me go to Blessed City and report to Zhuo Zhibo."

Yan Song cried out in alarm, "How's that possible? You killed Feng Zhang, you're the Eagle Wolf Guard's mortal enemy."

Ye Dachuan said, "Is...is that true?"

Li Qingshan took out that dark wolf waist badge and waved it. "Feng Zhang has already been fired from the Eagle Wolf Guard, they're probably letting me take over his position!" Keeping a low-profile was for a stalking beast to hunt and kill its prey at a critical moment, not for being despised and looked down upon by even some beam-hopping clown who'd then ultimately make a lot of trouble for him. That wasn't low-key anymore, but stupid. If you yourself lower yourself down to the ground, then don't blame others for stepping on you. Only displaying sufficient strength and influence was the proper way to reduce your troubles.

Liu Hong and Dragon Li shared a look, both rendered speechless. What kind of luck was that. Li Qingshan had been but a young country man half a year ago that could set himself against rascals and scoundrels at best, but now he could already join the Eagle Wolf Guard whose mere mention sent terror to the hearts of men from the martial world. It was simply a meteoric rise.

Li Qingshan's expression was undisturbed. Yan Song didn't want to believe, but he couldn't not believe. He'd made some inquiries after coming to Suncheer and also knew that the one who'd led Li Qingshan away from the restaurant that day was the Red Wolf Captain Hua Chengzan. He'd taken Feng Zhang and Li Qingshan to go meet with Wang Pushi.

He couldn't understand how these two would come to a lousy place like this, but the result was very clear. Li Qingshan had

ultimately come back while Feng Zhang had died a violent death. Those two people hadn't helped one of their own like Feng Zhang; the implications therein had truly provided food for thought. Now all had been made clear.

Wang Pushi had actually fired Feng Zhang on the spot. Li Qingshan also actually dared to call Wang Pushi "old Wang." Was it possible that he had some kind of relationship with Wang Pushi? The expression in his eyes had already changed when he rested them again on Li Qingshan.

He originally thought that Li Qingshan would have had to find ways of protecting himself even if the Eagle Wolf Guard didn't actively look for him, but now he had no way but to quell this thought. Only the Eagle Wolf Guard retaliated against other, such were the ways of the world. Was there anyone who dared to retaliate against the Eagle Wolf Guard.

Then he regretted being too impetuous as he thought a little deeper. The other side had such a powerful strength at such a young age, and he was also able to escape from death's clutches in such dangerous circumstances. It was very possible some figure stood behind him. How could he really treat him like an ordinary kid?

"That's great!" Ye Dachuan was delighted. "Before I was still worried you couldn't go to Blessed Peace, it just happens we can go together this time."

Li Qingshan said, "I'm still thinking whether I'm going or not."

Ye Dachuan said, "Why not go, it's really cool joining the Eagle Wolf Guard, you don't even need to pay when you go to brothels and gambling dens."

Li Qingshan sweat a little. So that was the advantage of joining the Eagle Wolf Guard? If "old Wang" were here, I can't say for sure he wouldn't slap you to death with his greatsword.

Ye Dachuan said, "It's late already, let's go let's go let's go, we'll chat while we eat."

How would Liu Hong let Ye Dachuan make the arrangements. He'd long ago let the sect disciples make appropriate arrangements. Yan Song unexpectedly also sat down after his expression went through a burst of fluctuations. He didn't talk anymore about what "there's nothing I need to say to a dead man."

Afterwards Ye Dachuan and Liu Hong played the mediators. After downing several cups of wine down his belly, Yan Song borrowed the tipsiness and searched for himself a way out of the embarrassing situation. He clinked cups with Li Qingshan and said awkwardly, "Li... Young hero Li..." He couldn't pursue the matter about hall master Wu anymore. Even their headquarters' master would blame him if he were to offend an Eagle Wolf guard for the sake of a hall master.

Li Qingshan faintly smiled, "Protector Yan, I have sinned against you earlier. Now I'll drink three cups in punishment and offer you an apology." He cleanly drained his wine from the cup in one gulp, then followed it with another three cups. He had no reason and no desire either to feud with people. It was of course all for the best if he could resolve the contradictions.

A burst of cheers rose from the table. Yan Song's expression also became much better.

Liu Hong said, "Everyone's a man of the rivers and lakes, everyone's got a big temper. There's nothing more normal than bumping and clashing together. But don't they say that it's better to squash enmity rather than to let it endure, or that you can't make friends if you don't fight first? One more friend is one more road, one more enemy is one more wall blocking your way. I've lived so long. My martial skills are mediocre, but it's thanks to this principle that I can foster my later years."

Ye Dachuan said, "Right right right, it's reason itself." He was in



a hurry to praise Li Qingshan in his mind. He knew when to advance and when to retreat, relied on strength but didn't scare the weak. His conduct and behavior simply didn't resemble that of a sixteen years old young man.

The both of them had experienced through many battlefields. Their level at enlivening the atmosphere was top rate. Now with Li Qingshan's attitude, one said a remark and the other added a word; soon the atmosphere became friendlier and more harmonious. Yan Song thickened his facial skin and made discreet inquiries. Li Qingshan's relationship with Wang Pushi was something everyone was curious about. No one spoke anymore in the space of a moment, only watching Li Qingshan.

Li Qingshan had no desire to be the fox borrowing the tiger's might. "This "old Wang" is actually called Wang Pushi, I'm not familiar with him."

Everyone exposed a disappointed expression, but Yan Song didn't actually believe him. If Wang Pushi didn't know you, would he take so much care of you and fire Feng Zhang for your sake?

Then he asked again, "Those two sirs are divine dragons that wouldn't show their tails in ordinary times inside Suncheer, why would they come to Suncheer City?"

Li Qingshan had no intention of hiding things either. He talked in broad strokes about Gu Yanying's matter, but concealed the topics about "concubine Serenity" and "cat monsters."

"White Eagle Captain! Bodhi brew!" Yan Song swallowed his spittle. This was a character from the legends for him, with power and privileges so great he couldn't even imagine. There was also the Bodhi brew of resounding fame, something only their headquarters's master had had the good fortune of drinking a cup of once. These little doubts originally still in his mind were hence definitely squashed. He could completely imagine how furious he would feel inside if an indiscreet subordinate were to drag his legs

while he tried to curry favors with the headquarters' master.

“Being fancied by captain Gu, Qingshan, your future prospects are immeasurable!” The indignation and rancor arisen from having his face slapped by Li Qingshan earlier were immediately swept away. The expression in his eyes when looking at Li Qingshan now was even a little more respectful.

It was just like a small-time bureaucrat hearing a certain colleague having an interview with national leader, and they'd even amiably conversed. They would feel deep veneration despite themselves. Why would he still bicker about these tiny grudges.

“Perhaps!” Li Qingshan discovered that the Iron Fist Gate was very amenable to circumstances from top to bottom. The taste in his heart was a little complicated however. That free and extraordinary woman with clothes whiter than snow had merely invited him to drink a cup of alcohol, but it was enough to thoroughly change the way an innate master looked at himself. It made him also even more cognizant of the gap between them.

Ye Dachuan took a deep breath in. “The three great heavyweights of the Ruyi region!” He'd mixed in Clear River City for many years. He had no scholarly successes and no martial achievement, but he was indeed very familiar with these street gossips and marketplace rumors.

Li Qingshan said with curiosity, “What are the three great heavyweights of the Ruyi region?”

Yan Song said, “The marquis of Ruyi Jiang Fu, White Eagle Captain Gu Yanying, Great General Han Anguo, belonging respectively to the three Mohist, Legalist, and Military [schools of thought](#) Jiang Fu manages government affairs and commands the nine prefectures. Gu Yanying manages the Eagle Wolf Guard and holds the supervision of the law in her hands. Han Anguo leads the Han clan's army and is in charge of military power. Each of them is a character with influence filling the sky, hence the streets call

them the three great heavyweights of the Ruyi region. I heard it's even this captain Gu who has the greatest influence among them."

The three schools are part of the Hundred Schools of Thoughts during the Warring States Period (475 – 221 BC) in China.

The Mohist school was founded by Mozi and emphasized impartial and pragmatic policies. The Legal school has already been mentioned earlier in the story. Founded by Han Fei, it's said that it took inspiration from the Mohist school and emphasized law and order. It was adopted by the Qin and later the Han dynasties as model for their governments. The Military school of thought studied warfare and strategy. One of its leaders was Sunzi, the author of the *The Art of War*.

Ye Dachuan said, "Without even comparing influence, the Eagle Wolf Guard has the responsibility of supervising the armed troops and the hundreds of officials. This captain Gu is the one people dare provoke the least. Qingshan, you're bound to immediately soar straight to the sky since you were able to casually obtain a promotion from her."

Li Qingshan silently noted these information down. It turned out the Eagle Wolf Guard belonged to the Legalist school. Then those who came from Mohist and Military schools were probably not scholars and soldiers either. How could people as equally famous as Gu Yanying be mere mortals? The waters of this world were simply immeasurably deep. But of course, the great majority of people would never have any opportunity in their whole lives to come into contact with any one among the three.

He also felt at the same time that reconciling with Yan Song was an incomparably correct decision. One more friend didn't necessarily open one more road, but he came from Clear River City and certainly knew many information he himself was unaware of. These information were extremely important for him, even relating to whether he would go to Blessed Peace or not.

Afterwards he also learned from Ye Dachuan that other than these three big heavyweights of the Ruyi region, Clear River prefecture also had three little heavyweights. Those were the Clear River prefect, the Red Eagle captain, and the Clear River general.

# Chapter 106

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Li Qingshan gained some more understanding of the imperial court's structure. This probably could also be regarded as the separation of powers into three branches! It seemed very primitive, but it was fundamentally impossible to use meticulous ways of government because the surface area was too big. Therein, the Eagle Wolf Guard rather resembled the Ming Dynasty's [two Depots and one Guard](#). Its influence was comparatively even a little greater. He couldn't help but say, "So the Eagle Wolf Guard turns out to be so extraordinary."

Two Depots and one Guard probably refers to the Eastern Depot, Western Depot, and the Embroidered Uniform Guard of the Ming Dynasty. All of them were imperial secret services/spy agencies.

Ye Dachuan said, "That's right, so don't hesitate, a great future is waiting for you."

Yan Song said, "Not spending money for wining and gambling is only a small thing. Would you still lack this little money as an Eagle Wolf guard? Qingshan you don't look to me like someone who adores power and influence, but the Eagle Wolf Guard also has many spiritual devices, spiritual stones, spiritual medicine, and techniques. There's probably no qi refining warrior that wouldn't be tempted."

Li Qingshan said, "Qi refining warrior? Then what's an innate master?"

Li Qingshan was modestly asking for guidance, and Yan Song's state of mind was increasingly milder and gentler. He was willing to be the light that guided the way. Moreover these things were nothing more than common knowledge.

It turned out that there were an extremely low amount of people who were able to refine true qi from the beginning. They were the so-called qi refining warriors. But to become a qi refining warrior

required extremely high natural talents; the great majority of people couldn't walk on this road. There was another road they could travel however, which was to train internal strength. Internal strength almost didn't have any harsh requirements on natural talent. Almost everyone could develop internal strength as long as you weren't not foolish or stupid and were willing to persevere,.

The internal arts trained by ordinary martial artists were equivalent to simplified and weaker qi refining techniques, with lowered requirements for natural talent. They were easier of entry and allowed almost everyone to learn them. But the internal strength trained this way was far from matching the effects of true qi, because they didn't genuinely unblock the meridians but were still restricted by the meridians. They were unable to nourish the [five internal organs](#), and even less able to radiate outside the body.

I believe the five internal organs have already been mentioned in the story. It's traditional taoist/chinese medicinal speak, just like the "four limbs and hundred bones" etc. The five organs are the heart, liver, spleen, lungs, and kidneys.

However, as long as one could train internal strength to the pinnacle and once again achieve a breakthrough, then they could transform it into true qi and become a qi refining warrior. Such people were precisely the commonly called innate masters.

The path of qi refining was divided into ten levels.

Moreover it wasn't as primitive as the kind of division in first-grade or second-grade masters inside the martial world. Sometimes it was very difficult to ascertain whether a certain person was a first-grade or second-grade master, because there the martial skills they trained in were each different, with a thousandfold diversity in effect, and their approaches were also greatly different.

But when it came to the way of qi refining, no matter the



cultivation or the technique, they were all for the sake of unblocking the [eight extraordinary meridians](#). Those were the Yang Heel meridian, Yin Heel meridian, Yang Linking meridian, Yin Linking meridian, Belt meridian, Penetrating meridian, Conception meridian, and Governing meridian.

The eight extraordinary meridians represent the deepest level of energy connection inside the body in traditional taoist/Chinese medicine.

These eight meridians were neither subordinate to the heart and lungs nor did they coordinate the relationship between the interior and the exterior. The reason they were known as extraordinary was because each of them went through the entire body and linked many major acupuncture points together. Each extraordinary meridian that was thoroughly unblocked strengthened true qi by a little, constituting another realm. One who'd completely unblocked the eight extraordinary meridians would have reached the ninth level of qi refining.

It was even more difficult if one wished to attain the realm of the tenth level. One had to entirely unblock the twelve standard meridians, divided respectively into the three yin hand meridians, three yang hand meridians, three yin feet meridian, and three yang feet meridians. These twelve meridians intersected with each others, connecting hands and feet with heart and lungs, joining the five elements together. It was extremely easy to suffer deviations and bring harm to the heart and lungs, but if one could breath through this juncture, one could reach the great perfection realm of the tenth qi refining level and walk to the pinnacle of qi refining warriors.

Li Qingshan hadn't even unblocked a single meridian, because there was absolute no talk of meridian whatsoever on the way of the demons he walked on. There were multitudes of strange types among monsters, very few of them with a body-type similar to humans. Would you actually ask of a snake or a bamboo to have

eight extraordinary meridians?

An idea rose inside his mind however when his thoughts reached this place. He was actually a real and genuine human after repressing the bull demon and tiger demon with the [Spirit Turtle Sea Guarding Secrets]. He'd recovered his former state, so was he truly unable of refining qi? It seemed he also had to find a qi refining technique and give it a little try. This impulsive thought of little importance embarked him on an even stranger and more unique road.

Yan Song complained after his explanations had reached thus far. The status of people like them who came from a martial arts background was really too low. He wasn't young anymore by the time he'd cultivated to the innate realm and was able to refine qi. He'd unblocked the Yang Heel meridian with the help of his profound internal strength turned into true qi, thus breaking through to the second level of qi refining, but no matter how he tried he couldn't progress any further, couldn't unblock the Yin Heel meridian and break through to the third level of qi refining.

Everyone comforted him a little. Yan Song said, "Body tempering is fierce and powerful, but after all it's not the genuine way. Qingshan you're young and you'll certainly be able to reach the third level, even the fourth or fifth level. If you can unblock the Belt meridian and reach the realm of the sixth level by cultivating a sea of qi, then you will be eligible for a promotion to the Red Wolf Guard holding office in Clear River City. Then this life will have been worth it."

Yan Song's vision was sinister. He could see that Li Qingshan's true qi couldn't have been at the second level of qi refining, but he could easily defeat himself. That meant he was walking on the road of body tempering. In a certain sense, the hard external martial arts of the martial world were also simplified versions of body tempering arts. However body tempering was the same as training in hard external skills in the martial world. The might was

formidable in the early stages, but they offered no future prospects. It was very difficult to cultivate to an even higher realm, hence they didn't receive much attention.

Li Qingshan said, "Many thanks for protector Yan's reminder, I'll pay attention in the future." As a monster however, it was simply impossible not to cultivate the body.

But his understanding was much clearer after hearing these words. Some conjectures ran through his mind. Which level of qi refining warrior could he rival in his monster state? As a Dark Eagle Captain, Blessed Peace's Zhuo Zhibo was probably at the level of a low-ranked Red Wolf Guard. He would probably have cultivated a sea of qi, his strength roughly around the sixth level of qi refining.

He didn't know which one was stronger out of a human forming a sea of qi or a monster forming a monster core, but there was presumable not much of a gap. He could escape even if the situation made a turn for the worse. The thought of going to Blessed Peace and experiencing the so-called "[It's easier to cultivate in the six ministries](#)" was a tempting thought for him.

"It's easier to cultivate in the six ministries" is a saying found in wuxia novels afaik. "Six ministries" refers to the ancient Chinese imperial governments often split into six ministries under the supervision of two prime ministers.

Li Qingshan asked again, "May I know which qi refining technique protector Yan has?"

Yan Song said embarrassed, "Qi refining techniques are secrets that can't be spread out of any gate and any sect."

Li Qingshan also knew his question was a little rude. It was somewhat inappropriate to ask for qi refining techniques after just reconciling with someone. He said smiling, "I have been rude." He downed a cup and didn't speak any further.

An embarrassed Yan Song thought for a moment. “However Qingshan, if you really want, this old man can also only bite the bullet.”

Li Qingshan was delighted. He offered another few toasts to Yan Song. Ye Dachuan and Liu Hong also burst in congratulations. Dragon Li exposed an incomparably envious expression, thinking that the strong was truly revered in this world. Li Qingshan hit this old stuff with a few slaps and earned a set of qi refining techniques instead.

After the meal, Yan Song passed on a set of qi refining secret techniques to Li Qingshan inside a quiet training room.

The name of this set of techniques was [Innate Qi Refining Secrets]. It was also divided into nine layers, but one would merely be able to reach the third level of qi refining after cultivating to the ninth layer. It was easy to see this wasn’t any sort of extraordinary divine skill.

Yan Son also frankly explained this point. “This [Innate Qi Refining Secrets] is merely used to build your basics. With Qingshan’s talents, you can certainly use a better technique to cultivate in the future.”

When it came to qi refining techniques, if one said they were precious then they were very precious and could cause many people to shed their bloods and risk their lives. But if one said they weren’t precious then they weren’t precious either, especially this [Innate Qi Refining Secrets] that was known by almost each and every person among qi refining warriors. The reason most of those who didn’t know it was because they had come into contact with better and stronger qi refining techniques from the start.

The most precious things weren’t the techniques but the people who could cultivate the techniques. On the whole, you merely had to possess a natural talent for qi refining and there would be countless people under the sky willing to teach you this set of basic

qi refining techniques. Li Qingshan would naturally have obtained it as long as he reached the Eagle Wolf Guard. Yan Song saw that Li Qingshan's future was immeasurable, so there was no harm doing such a favor that didn't cost him anything.

“Many thanks protector Yan!” Li Qingshan's greatest goal was to try whether he could refine qi or not. The relative level of this set of techniques was actually a small matter. On the contrary, this kind of basic technique most often had the particularity of being easier to start in even if their might and margin for progress weren't great. They were actually the most suitable for him to cultivate.

He had some other guesses in his mind. Was every supernatural skill and technique always divided in nine layers? Every supernatural skill and technique he was cultivating now was separated in the standard nine layers. He'd asked Little An, and it was so even with his [Dao of the Beautiful Bones].

Yan Song took his leave and went away to continue his selection of disciples, leaving Li Qingshan to cultivate inside the quiet room.

Incense helping to focus the mind and quieten the mood burned inside the room. Li Qingshan sat cross-legged, his eyes faintly shut as he silently comprehended the subtleties of the [Innate Qi Refining Secrets].

He'd once experienced the refining of qi, and had even cultivated a considerably strong true qi. But the result had been that all of it was for the purpose of turning the true qi into monster qi, ultimately allowing for his transformation into a monster. It was simply not a genuine qi refining method.

Only now could he be said to come into contact for the first time with a human qi refining technique. After a moment of comprehension, he discovered it was much simpler than those several supernatural skills the green bull had taught him. Especially the first three layers that didn't involve any meridian

yet and merely taught how to perceive and gather true qi.

It could be compared to a mid-school student studying primary school textbooks and completing physical programs designed for primary school students. It was extremely simple. Li Qingshan had condensed another thread of true qi before two hours went by. It was yet another proof his natural talents were out of the ordinary; he even had the innate talent for qi refining. If he'd been born inside Clear River City, he would probably have been taken in as a disciple and started on his journey on the road of a qi refining warrior long ago.

But then his monster core sucked in that thread of true qi before he any had time to feel happy, transforming it into monster qi.

Li Qingshan couldn't help but be dumbfounded. Was his way of thinking actually wrong? After some thoughts he once again started to cultivate the [Spirit Turtle Sea Guarding Secrets]. He stilled his state of mind and absorbed that spiritual qi between heaven and earth. A full six hours went by. The monster qi inside the monster core approached a state of saturation. Of course, he couldn't truly saturate the monster core with monster qi even if he were to cultivate for another sixty hours.

Li Qingshan once again cultivated the [Innate Qi Refining Secrets]. The true qi he coagulated was again swallowed by the monster core and turned into monster qi, but at least it left a little of it behind. He felt wild joy in his mind however. This proved his guess and choice were correct. He truly could refine qi like ordinary people.

The color of the sky gradually turned dusky. Li Qingshan cultivated with unrelenting efforts, gathering true qi bit by bit with great difficulties, just like the working class laboring under the cruel exploitation of great shareholders, the major part of the fruit of their painstaking labors striped away from them.

Of course, this great shareholder was still Li Qingshan himself. It

couldn't actually be said to be a waste.

Dragon Li came to knock on the door after a time and invited him to eat, but Li Qingshan was entirely submerged in this kind of self-abusing cultivation. There was but a single thought in his mind occupying his undivided attention, disregarding anything else.

# Chapter 107

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Liu Hong said, “Qingshan is cultivating, don’t disturb him!”

Yan Song said, “Little Dragon, you also have to cultivate very carefully. You don’t have the talent to directly refine qi, but as long as you break through to the innate realm by transforming internal strength into true qi, then it’s very easy to break through to the second level of qi refining. It’s not certain you’ll be worse than others.”

Li Qingshan had done in that hall master Wu, so Liu Hong had again humbly requested Yan Song to take Dragon Li with him to Clear River City so he could go study martial arts in the Iron Fist Gate’s headquarters. Liu Hong wouldn’t have spent such a big price in order to curry favor with Yan Song otherwise.

Dragon Li said in solemn respect, “Yes, protector!”

The three of them looked at door of the cultivation room, different thoughts going through their minds.

Roosters sang and daylight shone upon the world. An entire night had gone by before Li Qingshan opened his eyes. He silently sensed the true qi flowing inside his body with a burst of happiness. He finally cultivated to the first layer of the [Innate Qi Refining Secrets].

This didn’t actually mean that he could easily complete this technique. It was harder the higher you went no matter the skill. The time and effort needed also presented a geometric increase.

It was unfortunate he’d entirely eaten the spiritual pills whose names he didn’t know that Halfmoon had given him. Otherwise he was confident he could have completed the first three layers of the [Spirit Turtle Sea Guarding Secrets] with a single pill, and even unblock the Yang Heel meridian then breaking through to the second layer of qi refining.



The road of cultivation was still inseparable from the four words “[Wealth Companion Law Place](#).” Wealth was first, but this wealth wasn’t silver or gold but spiritual pills and immortal herbs. No matter the supernatural skill, the essence always consisted of gathering spiritual qi in the process. One had to eat one’s fill to train in martial arts. One had to feed one’s belly with qi to cultivate. External pills were an absolutely essential help.

As a reminder this is a Daoist saying about the things needed for cultivation. Namely wealth for resources, companions to cultivate with, techniques/scriptures to follow after and a place to cultivate in.

Natural talent and comprehension ability were also very important, but it was entirely impossible to immediately achieve great progress in skills and power after mere enlightenment, except for a very deep accumulation already stored beforehand.

Even a weak true qi was crucial for him however. He took out the [Cursive Sword Script] and injected true qi inside. The [Cursive Sword Script] indeed accepted the true qi. Although it didn’t end up shooting out even a single brush stroke, it was still a great encouragement for him.

That meant he could trigger and use the several talismans he had on him. The greatest difference between humans and animals was the ability to use tools and build things. Monsters and demons strengthened their own bodies, whereas humans drew support from external tools. They couldn’t directly attract the spiritual qi between heaven and earth, but they could refine pills and medicines. They didn’t have a powerful body, so they manufactured spiritual devices and talismans.

This was humankind’s power. Li Qingshan had to use such advantages the best he could. Moreover he couldn’t do without such power if he ever wanted to open that Sumeru ring from Soaring Dragon Elder. He again sat in mediation for a spell and recovered the formerly consumed true qi.

He groped out that finger ring and put it on his middle finger. He injected true qi inside. He knew he probably couldn't open it yet, but good or bad he still had to give it a try.

The true qi sank like flowing water into the ring and revolved inside, then flowed back to Li Qingshan's body. The ring naturally didn't show the slightest sign of opening, but what made him dumbstruck was that the innate true qi he'd painstakingly managed to cultivate had been cut down to less than a half in the turn of an eye. That wasn't the same as being consumed by the [Cursive Sword Script], which could be restored. This was a loss of strength.

He'd been forcibly kicked down from the first layer of the [Innate Qi Refining Secrets]. But the true qi left over had become very pure, like a great muddy river turning into a limpid stream. The quantity had lessened but the quality had greatly improved. The speed at which it circulated had also suddenly gone up a notch.

Moreover the more turbid the true qi was, the harder it was to break through to a new realm. It was very easy then to be struck at a bottleneck. Many qi refining warriors had to harden their wills and temper their true qi bit by bit just like the tempering of iron, in order to break through. But this Sumeru ring had directly helped him temper the impure iron into fine steel without requiring an ounce of energy from his part. Countless qi refining warriors and even cultivators of a higher realm would yearn for such a treasure inside their dreams.

Li Qingshan hadn't expect the Sumeru ring would even have such a function apart from storage.

This should be a good thing probably! But Li Qingshan's face was actually filled with a bitter smile. Was it easy for him to painstakingly cultivate this little bit of true qi? Not only he had to be exploited by the monster core, he also had to go through the ring's honing. It would simply be the death of him. It was much the same feeling as [struggling for several decades and then](#)

[returning overnight to the same situation before liberation.](#)

“Struggling for several decades and then returning overnight to the same situation before liberation”: A sentence which references the household-responsibility system introduced by Deng Xiaoping starting from 1978, which held individuals responsible for profits and losses and was seen as a quasi private ownership system, instead of the egalitarian system where the state assumed all profits and losses. Google tells me this is a sentence written by a journalist at the time. Some communists felt they’d struggled for decades to finally see communism’s victory, but then things returned to the same (as in the return of “private ownership”) as before the communist liberation in a single night.

Li Qingshan heaved a heavy sigh. He knew this was actually the correct choice. He would waste some time now, but then save a lot of time in the future. For the great majority of people, their time wasn’t wasted on cultivation but when stuck in a bottleneck, unable to advance an inch further.

Just like protector Yan. He’d already reached the second layer of qi refining long long ago, but no matter how he couldn’t break through to the third level. He was stuck at this juncture. He’d wanted for so many years to temper and purify his true qi, but he didn’t have this ability even if he had the will. The true qi transformed from internal strength was truly too impure.

Li Qingshan closed his eyes and once again started to cultivate. However he didn’t take the ring off this time.

Yan Song was already done selecting the disciples and was ready to set off, but he couldn’t catch sight of Li Qingshan even until deep into the night. He knocked several times on the door, but there was no answer.

Liu Hong said, “Could something have happened?” But he was actually thinking, could protector Yan have deliberately given him a problematic set of qi refining secrets to set a trap and lead Li

Qingshan into suffering deviations.

Yan Song frowned tight, also unaware of the reason. If he hadn't heard Li Qingshan's extremely mild and long breathing, he would simply have suspected Li Qingshan of suffering from deviations and dying already.

Refining qi was the same as doing other things. One had to pay attention and strike a balance between work and rest all the same, keep control of the right measure of tension and relaxation. It wasn't just better the longer you kept at it. Otherwise it would not only be useless but even harmful instead.

He didn't remind Li Qingshan of this point because one would be aware of it even more keenly during the process of cultivation. The results from refining qi would increasingly worsen along with the passage of time. The spirit would also become increasingly exhausted and burned out. Moreover true qi was also extracted from the body's primordial source. It needed the replenishment from food and drinks, otherwise it would be like a river without a source, a tree without roots.

Li Qingshan had indeed encountered such a problem, but he'd instead turned to the cultivation of the [Spirit Turtle Sea Guarding Secrets]. The spirit turtle sank into the abysses of the seas and slept for thousand years, but actually swallowed the spiritual qi of the world at all time. Sitting in meditation wasn't something that exhausted Li Qingshan; it was the same as cultivating while sleeping instead.

His thoughts flashed. He once again revolved the [Innate Qi Refining Secrets]. It was very difficult at the beginning, and the slightest carelessness would break him away from his state of meditation, screeching the cultivation of the [Spirit Turtle Sea Guarding Secrets] to a halt. But he gradually mastered the knack of it and turned the [Spirit Turtle Sea Guarding Secrets] into a sort of instinct. It was the same as someone being still able to continuously breathing even when they slept. This wasn't because

of any cleverness on Li Qingshan's part, but because this supernatural skill was truly too profound, far surpassing his imagination.

Afterward he felt himself in a kind of state both asleep and awake. He circulated the [Innate Qi Refining Secrets]; it was equivalent to two supernatural skills from both demons and humans revolving inside his body at the same time.

Li Qingshan discovered that the monster core wasn't so greedy for true qi in such a state. It would leave behind a greater part of the fruits of his labor for him.

The cultivation speed of the [Innate Qi Refining Secrets] also reached an unprecedented peak in such a state. How formidable was the primordial source of his body? Not eating nor drinking for several days was simply not a great problem for him at all.

For a full three days and three nights, Li Qingshan didn't rest and didn't sleep, didn't eat and didn't drink, fully submerged inside his cultivation. Finally he once again opened his eyes after forcibly cultivating the [Innate Qi Refining Secrets] back to the first layer.

He heaved a long sigh and felt the fiercely hunger in his belly. He once again took out the [Cursive Sword Script] and injected an incomparably pure true qi inside. A stroke had already lit up even before the true qi became fully exhausted, then a beam of sword qi shot out.

Earlier he'd seemed to be tossing damp logs inside the stove; it had been very difficult to ignite a fire. But now what he was using was high level charcoal. It burned easily and provided a great amount of heat.

Two Iron Fist Gate disciples stood guard outside the door. They suddenly felt a chill behind their backs. They looked each other said said, "Are you feeling a little cold?" "Really a bit cold. It's a sunny summer day though."

Li Qingshan took back the [Cursive Sword Script] and took off the Sumeru ring, once again hanging it in front of his chest. Then he stood up and opened the door. The sunlight was harsh on his eyes.

“Young hero Li, you finally came out!” said an Iron Fist Gate disciple. The other rushed out to transmit the news.

Yan Song and Liu Hong rushed over in not long of a time.

Liu Hong said, “Qingshan, you came out? I even thought something had happened to you, and was almost going to break inside several times.”

Li Qingshan said with a laugh, “My apologies, this technique protector Yan gave me is truly too profound. I was absorbed in trying to comprehend it and forgot the time.”

Yan Song said, “Were you really refining qi? How many layers have you cultivated to?”

Li Qingshan said, “I just cultivated to the first layer.”

Yan Song said, “This can’t be said to be slow.” But it could definitely not be said to be fast either. The first layer of the [Innate Qi Refining Secrets] was the simplest one. He’d seen with his own eyes children with special talents cultivate to the first layer in only four hours. Of course Li Qingshan couldn’t be regarded as slow, but it was really unheard of to use three days the first time one refined qi.

Li Qingshan said, “I’ve made you all wait for a long time. Now we can depart!”

Liu Hong fished out a stack of silver bills and handed them to Li Qingshan. Li Qingshan had come knocking at their doors to demand repayment to begin with.

Li Qingshan said, “Gate master Liu is looking down on me now. Protector Yan has been so generous, how can I be a petty man. There’s no need to mention the matter of money again.” He’d

never been willing to owe anyone in the slightest in his whole life. His heart and mind could only be at ease if no debt were owed. That set of [Innate Qi Refining Secrets] wasn't any extraordinary secret collection of supernatural skills, but it was extremely important for him. It was worth it obtaining it even one day earlier.

Liu Hong was happy inside. Of course he couldn't make Yan Song hand over the money he'd gifted to him. These were all actually from his retirement fund.

Yan Song was also admiring. He could disregard ten thousand taels of silver with a faint smile. It wouldn't be much if he were a noble son of a wealthy family, but it was truly too rare for a young man like him who'd come from the mountains. This kid had an innate spirited boldness that was out of the ordinary. It was no wonder someone would recognize his worth and take a fancy to him.

Li Qingshan finally gathered two thousand taels worth of silver notes as travel expenses after declining several times.

When Li Qingshan came out of the Iron Gate Sect, he saw the previously always cold and cheerless Iron Fist Gate filled with gongs and drums clamoring to the skies, along with firecrackers crying in chorus. There were even [teams of dragon and lion dancers](#) surrounding the Iron Fist Gate so tight even water wouldn't leak through. Of course it wasn't for the sake of seeing Li Qingshan off.

Dragon and lion dances are those people you see dancing while wearing dragon and lion costumes during Chinese festivals, especially the new lunar year.

Four children with reddened eyes were sent in front of Yan Song. They were the chosen children who had the opportunity to leave this tiny Suncheer City and reach a vaster world. But at the same time they were leaving the land of their births, leaving their loved

ones far behind.

Li Qingshan crossed his arms and watched on the sidelines. He suddenly heard someone call his name. He turned his head and saw Village Chief Li and Steward Liu also inside the crowd, with the two brothers Tiger Li and Panther Li beside them. There were even several villagers from Crouching Bull Village behind them.



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Li Qingshan said, “Did you come to see off Dragon Li?”

Steward Liu said, “We.... We also came to see you off, Second... Qingshan. You’ve really grown, don’t take the matters from back then to heart.” The current Li Qingshan had already become an eminently formidable personage in his eyes. He felt awkward just talking to him.

The other villagers also came forward and offered their congratulations one by one. They each even carried local products that they stuffed in Li Qingshan’s hands.

Li Qingshan looked at these familiar faces, his heart at once filled with myriads of deep emotions. For a while he didn’t know what to say, where to start. The Crouching Bull Village he’d wished to leave day and night all the way since his childhood suddenly emerged in front of his eyes with incomparable clarity. Every house, every stalk of vegetation, all of it was vivid in his eyes.

That deep well that had stranded him for more than a dozen years and that he’d always wished to jump out of, these muds and mosses he’d been fed up with, all became intimate and dear at this moment. Village Chief Li hugged Dragon Li, wildly streaking old tears. The present scene’s chaos and clamor suddenly became silence when they came to Li Qingshan’s ears.

He even saw Big Brother Li and Big Wife Li inside the crowd. They cowered and hid from the city nobles. They looked at Li Qingshan, looking as if they wanted to go forward but didn’t dare to either. They were incomparably regretful at this moment. There was no telling how much glory they could shared in if they hadn’t fallen out with Li the Second. Their eyes shone with a luster of hope when they saw Li Qingshan look at them.

But Li Qingshan’s line of sight immediately turned away. That which must be severed had been severed long ago. Water splashed

on the ground couldn't be taken back any longer. It wasn't that he couldn't let go of these feelings, but they were already in completely different worlds now. They also didn't understand that rather than obtaining great riches, it was easier for them to die a violent death if they were to be his close relatives.

Yan Song passed down the order and everyone retreated to the sides. A carriage dragged by two horses drove over. Each horse was an especially divine spirited horse.

Li Qingshan, protector Yan, and Dragon Li all boarded on the carriage together with those four children. The carriage traveled slowly and stopped in front of the county government offices. Ye Dachuan and the adviser happily came up and sat down. There would certainly be no danger with the protection of these masters.

Li Qingshan's eyes immediately brightened when he saw the thing in Ye Dachuan's hands. "Stone Rending Bow!" He'd left this bow behind in his yard inside Suncheer. That courtyard had already been tidied up when he'd gone and taken a look after he'd come back. New residents had settled in, and of course no one knew where the Stone Rending Bow had gone. He hadn't gone on a diligent search either, and hadn't expected it to be with Ye Dachuan. He lightly pulled the bowstring with his forefinger; it was easy to the extreme. It wouldn't be a problem to fire even a hundred arrows in succession with his current strength.

Li Qingshan once again saw the owner of this Stone Rending Bow in a long pavilion ten miles outside the city. Sick Yellow Tiger said, "Congratulations Qingshan for once again making progress." He discovered he could no longer see the depths of this young man, but he was indeed well informed. Only an innate master could defeat another innate master face to face. He'd truly achieved the words he'd once spoken, and in a mere few months' time at that.

Li Qingshan said smiling, "Chief hunter, you haven't wasted your time." He could see that the current Sick Yellow Tiger was already infinitely close to the level of a first-grade master. They once again

set on their journey after a few farewell cups. Finally they left Suncheer City behind them as it definitely disappeared from their sights.

Li Qingshan quietly said inside his heart, "Farewell forever, my homeland."

He'd understood long ago already that he wouldn't be coming back, no matter if he died and became dust on this journey or soared to the skies. Homeland would be wherever he went from this day onward.

They traveled by day and rested by night, journeying for three days inside the mountains. The horizon widened all of a sudden; a vast plain spread out in front of Li Qingshan.

Golden fields of wheat as far as the eye could see surged in waves and waves of wheat in the summer wind. Ribbons and ribbons of chimney smokes rose from one hamlet after another therein. It was a greatly different sight from Crouching Bull Village.

Yan Song said, "We've come out of Suncheer's area. We can reach the ferry crossing downriver in another three to five days. Then we can switch to a boat and directly sail to Blessed Peace and even Clear River City."

Li Qingshan took out that map Gu Yanying and gifted him. A dot of light brightened with a flash of his thoughts. The ferry crossing downriver was but several dozen miles away from them. Yan Song said in astonishment, "A Mind Map, and even a Mind Map of the Verdant province. The value of this thing is considerable. Qingshan, where did you get it?"

In general, the greater the area a map covered, the rougher it would be, while the smaller it was the more detailed it would be. But a Mind Map was detailed to the extreme even when including ten thousands of miles, solidifying ten thousand miles inside the mind. Although it was a mere low rank spiritual device, it was still very precious, let alone this sort of Mind Map covering the entirety

of the Verdant Province.

Li Qingshan suddenly said, “Protector Yan, Lord Ye, let us part ways here!” During these days, he’d already gotten from these two people a rough understanding of these rivers and lakes, of this world, at least what they knew of them. He wouldn’t be confused any longer when he went out.

Ye Dachuan said, “What, you’re not going together with us?”

Li Qingshan faintly shook his head. “I’m planning on taking a walk and travel alone on the road. I’m truly sorry for making you wait three days for me.” In essence, the reason why he’d chosen to journey together with them had perhaps merely stemmed from a certain kind of fear. For a man who’d never left his village for over a dozen years suddenly trying to reach the world outside, to reach the so-called great cities, he would have some faint timidity inside him no matter what, even to the point of relying on those two people who weren’t even as strong as him, merely so they could look after each others on the road.

Everyone thirsted for adventure and longed for freedom, but everyone would feel fright and be at a loss of what to do when a genuinely free world of incomparable vastness was put in front of them. Li Qingshan was also the same.

But now was the time to put these feelings aside. When he’d left these overlapping ranges of mountains behind, this vast plain, these resplendent golden fields, these limpid streams and rivers, these faint handwriting on the map, all of it reflected inside his eyes. It was so beautiful and vivid. His footprints hadn’t stamped on even one ten thousandth part of the map.

The few people looked at each others and didn’t know how to persuade him. They suddenly heard Li Qingshan spread open his arms and say to the vast plains, “I am going to wander everywhere in those five lakes and four seas, through the nine provinces under the heavens, taste every fine delicacies on this world, drink every

fine liquor under the sky, cultivate the fiercest divine skills, battle the strongest enemies, bed the most beautiful women. World, I am coming, hahahaha!”

His voice began soft and ended loud. The sound of his laughter was like the jolt of thunder. The words he said were a declaration foolish enough to make one smack one’s lips. Was it stupid? Perhaps it was. That bull that had listened to him say these stupid words was here no longer, but he no longer needed to ask of anyone, “Can I realize my dreams?”

He didn’t need someone else’s answer and didn’t need someone else’s approval, so of course he didn’t mind someone else’s gaze either. The answer had long been inside his heart.

Those people followed the departure of this tall figure with their eyes on the hillside, after they agreed to meet again inside Blessed Peace. They saw him merge into that golden plain and roll about inside the wheat fields like a big child. He vanished from sight very quickly.

Those were originally funny childish actions, but they all recalled the same few words at the same time inside their hearts. “[A dragon returning to the sea,](#)” “[A tiger entering the deep mountains](#)”

“A dragon returning to the sea, a tiger entering the deep mountains” is a quote from the classic Chinese novel Water Margin. It means someone returning to or finding the environment he was made for.

Li Qingshan didn’t follow the main roads. He dashed all along the way in the wilderness and very quickly caught up to a small dot on the map. That was a county city much more prosperous than Suncheer. He didn’t bother remembering its name but directly rushed to the biggest restaurant in the city and ordered the seat with the best scenery. He chose a table filled with the best wines and food. Every dish was a local specialty. Not only he’d never eaten many of them, he hadn’t even heard of some of them. Every

jar of wine had been aged for twenty years. They couldn't be compared spiritual wines, but even so they had their own peculiar tastes.

The owner came to entertain him personally when he saw a great customer had come. He suddenly smiled and said after drinking a few cups with him, "Widowed wine is tasteless. This noble son certainly has to be accompanied by a few beautiful women!" He took Li Qingshan for a later generation indulging in pleasures who'd managed to escape from his family with great difficulty.

Li Qingshan first stayed blank, then smiled. "I must! Why wouldn't I be, I have a bunch of money!" He was just like the most vulgar of upstarts.

He wanted to cultivate painstakingly and go toward the nine skies, but he didn't plan on being a suffering monk. He'd vowed to marry a woman like Gu Yanying, but before genuinely making the vow to spend their days and grow white hairs together with a certain woman, he wasn't planning on being an ascetic monk either.

Man certainly didn't live in the world for only the sake of pain and suffering, otherwise it would be better to just die and be done with it. These distant dreams of his were seeds of hope planted inside his heart rather than self-torment.

Therefore, more than a dozen lovely dressed women wearing makeup sat beside him and joked with him, beaming with smiles. Their mouth continuously shouted "my lord" or "noble son," and those with bigger guts even stretched their hands inside his clothes against his chest.

Li Qingshan was at first a little uneasy and was teased by a few women of pleasure. But he relaxed very quickly, embracing left and hugging right without the slightest care. His face with filled with laughter, but his eyes were clear and limpid like water from beginning to end. He was like a child playing a very novel game.

Children were also easily bored however. He wasn't planning on really doing anything. It wasn't that he had some dislike for these brothel women, but he'd seen the almost ultimate beauty of Gu Yanying or even Halfmoon, so it was especially easy for him to be fed up with such a game.

He didn't understand before. Only now did he know the meaning of ["She turned her gaze and smiled a smile of a hundred graces, outshining the fairest faces of the six palaces."](#)

"She turned her gaze and smiled a smile of a hundred graces, outshining the fairest faces of the six palaces" is a stanza from the poem Song of an Everlasting Regret from Tang poet Bai Juyi.

Bang!

Someone suddenly slapped the doors open and shouted, "Be quieter!" The berating came from a young noble son wearing splendid clothes and a sword, a precious crown atop his head. As the saying went, three women were enough for a drama. It was difficult for a table drinking with women of pleasure not to be extremely raucous.

An elegant woman stood behind this noble son and looked at Li Qingshan with a face full of disgust.

Li Qingshan put his index against his lips and made a long "shhhh." Then he stood up with a yawn and casually groped out some silver notes that he put on the table. That group of brothel women no longer cared about him and went to fight for the silver notes instead.

Li Qingshan walked beside the noble son and observed him. This noble son put his hand on the handle of his sword. He was arrogant but he had the capital for arrogance. Li Qingshan could tell that he was already an innate master. No, he should be one with the natural endowments to be a qi refining warrior. The woman behind him was also the same. Two qi refining warriors naturally had the qualifications to consider everyone else beneath

them. Li Qingshan was merely a hedonistic son for them, and killing him in one strike of the sword wasn't necessarily anything extraordinary for them.



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Li Qingshan said, “Please make way!” Then he squeezed past that noble son and gave a deep look at that woman who seemed like a scholar. He shook his head. She was beautiful. It would have been hard for him to earn a smile from the siren even if he it gave his all in his former life. Ah but now, his goals were much higher. He carried the small happiness of his secret dreams and casually smelled her sweet fragrance as he passed by her. Dreams were things that brought happiness.

The woman’s brows wrinkled tighter. She didn’t know what it was that made her the angriest: the smell of rouge on Li Qingshan, his absolutely unrestrained gaze, or perhaps it might well be that head shake at the end.

The noble son nearly pull his sword out, but the woman shook her head and allowed Li Qingshan to go downstairs and then leave, contempt showing in her eyes.

Li Qingshan hadn’t leaped up and immediately counterattacked like a cat with its tail stepped on, even if he had the strength to do so. He found that he could avoid quite a lot of trouble if he could but resist a little momentary anger. Of course, he wasn’t all that angry either.

However this person who avoided trouble was now going to find trouble for other people on his own initiative. He came at the foot of the restaurant and shook off the smell of rouge from his body. He’d wanted to experience it for himself, and he’d experienced it. He didn’t take it to heart in the least. He knocked on the porcelain jar at his hips. “Little An, let’s go kill some bad guys!” The reason he chose to part ways with protector Yan and the others wasn’t simply for the sake of enjoying a cup of wine with beautiful women.

A “Dong Dong” noise answered from inside the porcelain jar. Li

Qingshan laughed mischievously and left in great strides toward a dark little alley. He only felt the gazes behind him thoroughly vanish after he plunged inside the darkness.

“Rong Zhi, is there any problem?”

The scholar called “Rong Zhi” said, “His gait is calm and steady. He looks to me like someone who’s practiced martial arts.”

“It’s some external martial arts at most. I’d have taught him a lesson if you didn’t stop me.”

“It’s only an insignificant person. Even killing him would merely be dirtying our hands, what need is there for that? We still better hurry with our meal. Tomorrow we have to hasten our journey and hurry a little faster to Blessed Peace City.”

“Yes, the Eagle Wolf Guard rarely recruits new guards, we can’t let this opportunity slip by.” A feverish fire ignited in the man’s eyes. As long as he could join the Eagle Wolf Guard, he would step beyond the boundaries of these rivers and lakes, becoming a man above men. He was determined to obtain this status.

“I fear it won’t be so easy. Every master within a thousand miles will be attracted to Blessed Peace this time around. Even masters at the third or fourth level of qi refining might appear. Available spots are limited, there’s bound to be a battle to the death.”

“Don’t worry, we have these talismans as trump card. We can turn the tide even if we were to encounter powerhouses.” The man was full of confidence and very quickly pushed Li Qingshan out of his mind. Indeed, he was but a mere insignificant character.

They didn’t know however that their dialogue had clearly gone into Li Qingshan’s ears. His hearing had long ago entered the level of monsters. He could listen clearly to sounds even ten miles away with a little focus.

The Eagle Wolf Guard actually began to recruit people. It might well be that Feng Zhang’s death had left a spot open. Even Wang

Pushi probably didn't think that he could have escaped from that disaster and fill in that spot! As to whether his own appearance would blot the hope of these people from the sky, that was something he naturally wouldn't care about. He didn't have too much time to think about it at this time either.

Because several black shadows had already blocked his way inside the small alley, crowding forward with unpleasant faces. The small city was somewhat flourishing, but there weren't many outsiders, and even less outsiders as high-profile as Li Qingshan. The news about a young man in his teens with a great amount of money on him had spread out very quickly. He actually even dared to walk on his own into this world of darkness. It would be too unreasonable if they didn't mug him a little.

Li Qingshan quietly said, "Our luck's pretty good!" He knocked the jar. "Time for dinner!"

"Hand over your money!" A man pulled out a shiny dagger, but what answered him was an even brighter Cremation Blood Fire. The flames swallowed several people almost without any sound. Their flesh and blood became pure energy that merged inside the flames.

A dot of lantern fire burned inside the darkness, illuminating a wonton booth manned by an old man. It didn't have business but only moth hovering around. It still barely managed to survive however.

A young man came in in great strides and loudly said, "Boss, a bowl of wonton!"

"Alrighty!" The old man moved deftly. Wontons very quickly floated up and down inside clear water.

"It's so late, why aren't you resting yet. You should be quietly enjoying your later years at your age." Li Qingshan started to chat and talk without much thought. The old man sighed and complained. It was nothing else than lack of piety from his

children. He and his old companion lacked a reliable source of income for their livelihood; the most ordinary of pains in this world.

Li Qingshan sat beside the small booth, smiling and comforting at the same time he ate the wontons. As he sat alone in a dark corner and ate the simplest of foods facing such an old man with hardship written all over his face, he actually felt even much better than enjoying drinks with beautiful women. It was truly odd and uncanny.

“Little brother, you don’t seem like a local to me. I’ll shoot my mouth off and advise you with a few words. Hurry up and go back to the inn after you’re done eating, this place isn’t very peaceful at night.”

Li Qingshan said, “Could there be some bad guys?” Then he heard even more grumbling and complaints. Female brothel owners who forced honest girls into prostitution, unscrupulous profiteers who acted as loan sharks, gangs from the martial world terrorizing the weak with their strength. No place would be lacking in such things.

Li Qingshan listened in silence and noted them down in silence. He casually made some discreet inquiries about where those people lived. He ate four or five bowls of wonton in succession, then tossed down the silver he’d obtained from these robbers just earlier. Li Qingshan stood up and said his farewells.

“This... this is too much!” The old man cried in alarm and raised his head, looking at the shadows of a Li Qingshan already vanished from sight. A gust of nightly wind started to blow. Remembering those creepy stories he’d heard about ghosts and demons, he decided to immediately close his booth.

A monster came knocking at the door that night, like a chivalrous knight helping the weak, rooting out the strong and bringing peace to honest people.

There was no evil supernatural skills or spells in the world, only evil people. It would be great humane benevolence if one were to thoroughly kill off all the evil crafty men in this world.

Daylight wasn't lit yet when Li Qingshan left the small city. He found a patch of wilderness and practiced the [Bull Demon Strong Fist]. His heart felt carefree after killing more than a dozen people the previous night. His fists fired out like drums, breaking through the air with loud bangs.

Little An refined the blood essence from these dozen people at the side. The Cremation Blood Fire rolled in circles around his body, transforming into every sorts of shapes, perhaps ferocious beasts or perhaps venomous snakes. In the end it actually formed into a lotus flower that carried him up as it soared in the sky and flew over the wilderness. Now it rose, now it dropped, its might outstanding. Thickets of wild weeds withered and died wherever it went, leaving a track of death on the ground behind it.

It would be as easy as pie for Little An if he wanted to kill a master at the second level of qi refining like Yan Song. Li Qingshan was both envious and admiring. His current strength wouldn't lose to Little An in the slightest, but he couldn't soar and fly. However, Little An was still far away from achieving the degree necessary to again form flesh and blood. The [Dao of the Beautiful Bones] was frightfully powerful, but it was difficult to cultivate. He needed even more bloody sacrifices.

Li Qingshan hadn't gathered money and valuables with any great care during the massacre last night, but his wealth still had easily reached several dozen thousand taels. If those people had been sheep-eating wolves, then he was a wolf-eating tiger. He suddenly discovered that mundane money didn't have much meaning anymore for qi refining warriors, because they had the strength to stand absolutely above ordinary people. Even using the lowest level of methods like robbing, they would still easily obtain a huge wealth that would be difficult for ordinary people to even hope to

amass in their entire lives.

True wealth for qi refining warriors lay with those spiritual pills and spirit stones that could raise the level of cultivation. But one could imagine that these resources were certainly hoarded by powerful influences. Ordinary people would probably never hear of them during all their lives. Joining the Eagle Wolf Guard was the best choice if one wanted to come into contact with these things.

He called Little An and once again started on his way. He cared nothing about day or night on the road. He traveled when he wanted to travel and stopped when he wanted to stop. He exterminated two or three dens of bandits in passing and finally caught up to a great river three days later. He halted his steps.

This river was precisely the Clear River. It originated from Clear River City and stretched continuously for thousands of miles. One could directly reach the Clear River capital city along with it. The surface of this great river spanned across ten to twenty miles. He'd never seen such a river even adding his two lives together. His chest and mind seemed to widen when he beheld these vast gleaming waves reflecting in the sunlight.

Li Qingshan reached a great town on the riverside, called Downriver Town, which had grown from the downriver ferry crossing. It was merely a town, but it was much more bustling than even Suncheer City. Riding atop a horse, he only saw the squeeze of people moving back and fro, their boiling noises filling the sky. An idea suddenly struck his mind. Could Little An immediately refine a body of flesh and blood anew if they killed all these people? He immediately shook his head. Wouldn't he become a homicidal manic then?

There were countless boat oars on the river banks, and people walked hither and thither on the docks. It was extraordinarily bustling, and naturally there wouldn't be a lack of passenger ships going down to the south. Li Qingshan even saw [a great dragon boat](#)

as tall as a multistoried building. There were carved verandas and painted pavilions on the boat, just like a luxurious restaurant traveling over water.

He immediately discarded the idea of renting a small boat and boarded a great dragon boat.

The scenery was best in the rooms at the top floor of the dragon boat. They were also the most expensive and actually required several thousands of taels. Li Qingshan naturally wasn't lacking silver. He took out a few silver notes and saw a smile immediately hang on the face of the boat steward. He assigned a maid to guide Li Qingshan to a room on the top floor, and even left rather ambiguous suggestions before leaving. He could summon her no matter what needs he had.

The room was extremely expansive, it could even accommodate several dozen persons without them feeling cramped. The decorations were even more luxurious than the best hotels he'd lived in along the way. He opened the windows and looked down upon the harbor and Downriver Town, guessing at when Yan Song and the others would arrive. He saw two familiar faces on the docks however. They were precisely that pair of man and woman he'd met three days ago in the restaurant.

The man said in annoyance, "What, the rooms on the top floor are all full already, we have to live downstairs?"

The steward said embarrassed, "There's really no way. Noble son, the second floor is also very luxurious, please just make do!" Who would lack money if they could afford several thousand taels of silver to board a ship. They wouldn't be willing to lose face even if you were to give them several dozen thousands of taels.

The woman said, "We've never had the custom of making do once in our lives. May the steward please think of a way, money isn't an issue."

The man frowned. He raised his head and just happened to see Li

Qingshan. Then man calmly smiled and said, “I’ll personally go up and discuss it with him.” The woman hesitated faintly, then nodded. She didn’t want to create trouble, but she was even less willing to live in a low level ship hold, to live under someone else’s feet. She hoped that young man would be a little tactful. If he didn’t know tact, then it’d serve him right to suffer a little so he could understand the viciousness of the human world.



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Hence, the two of them once again appeared in front of Li Qingshan. The man didn't waste any time with nonsense and tossed a pile of silver notes in front of Li Qingshan. "Take up the money and go downstairs!"

Li Qingshan slapped the silver notes in the man's hand. "You better ask someone else!"

The woman stopped the angry man and introduced themselves with a faint smile, "I'm called Qian Rongzhi, this is my elder brother Qian Rongming."

The steward interrupted in alarm, "Could the two guests be from Ancient Wind City's Qian clan?" Ancient Wind City was a considerably great city. He was a man who'd sailed to the four directions. How could he not have heard of great clans who could groom qi refining warriors.

Qian Rongming snorted proudly. Qian Rongzhi merely nodded in indifference and continued to say to Li Qingshan, "My advice for you is better to accept it. My brother is capable of killing people once he becomes angry." Since they came from a great clan, then she had to pay attention to the appearance of a great clan, not losing her bearing at any time. She liked best to achieve victory without resorting to arms.

Li Qingshan crossed his arms. "Is that right? I'd actually like to experience it for myself." Having someone come bully to his door for the second time, there were still limits to his tolerance.

Qin Rongzhi's expression changed faintly. She came from a great clan and was born with the natural talent to refine qi. Together with a beautiful appearance that earned her the title of first beauty in Ancient Wind City, she was worthy of being called a woman beloved by the gods. From her childhood to now, nothing was impossible to her as long as she opened her mouth, especially those

stinky men who were ready to slave away for her like horse and cattle. When had she ever been refused. Compared her self-possessed appearance, the pride deep in her bones was much greater than even her brother Qian Rongming. She coldly said, “It seems you’d rather drink bitter wine rather than a toast.”

“I’ve never been picky in my whole life. Toast or bitter wine, I can give everything a try!” Li Qingshan earnestly observed her face. He watched the changes on the face of a young miss from a great clan as if he were watching a certain miraculous exhibition.

Qian Rongzhi took a deep breath in and walked back a step. She faintly said, “A man of the martial world with some external martial arts actually dares to act wild in front of qi refining warriors, you simply can’t tell life from death. Such a stupid thing is surplus in this world even if alive, there’s no harm in killing him.”

Qian Rongming came forward with a nasty grin. The steward sighed and was already preparing to call people and gather the corpse. It was truly too unwise to go head to head with the Qian clan.

A sudden sound came right at this moment. Everyone turned their heads around and took a look. They saw a man over thirty coming out of a room. His stature wasn’t tall, and a pair of droopy eyes sat on his black face as he contemptuously looked at them.

“What thing are you?” Qian Rongming went forward in great anger, but Qian Rongzhi actually pulled him back and watched the man with vigilance, “I dare ask, who is your excellency? What is your meaning?”

Li Qingshan realized it was yet another qi refining warrior, a master at the third level at that. No wonder he dared to disregard this pair of brother and sister at the second level of qi refining.

The black-faced man said in derision, “Just relying on your two’s talent, you’re far too lacking to join the Eagle Wolf Guard. Why

waste your time to go to Blessed Peace City, hurry up to leave the boat and go back home!”

Only then did Li Qingshan understand that this man wasn't sticking out for his sake, but because the Eagle Wolf Guard spots were limited, hence he acted in advance to strike a psychological blow to his rivals when he realized Qian Rongming and his sister's purpose.

Qian Rongming and Qian Rongzhi exchanged a look. Their strength was one level lower, but there might be some opportunities if the both of them joined hands. However they were bound to use those precious talismans and lose the opportunity to join the Eagle Wolf Guard in that case.

“You just wait.” The two of them hesitated a little, then left some vicious words before leaving hurriedly. The words weren't only meant for that man, but even more so for Li Qingshan; they threw a vicious headlong glance at Li Qingshan.

Li Qingshan said, “Many thanks for helping me out of trouble. May I venture to ask this brother's honorable name?”

“Kid, don't think you can act as you please just because you've got some money. There are too many people in this world you can't afford to provoke, I advise you to disembark in a hurry!” The man slammed shut his room after speaking in a cold indifferent tone.

Li Qingshan shrugged. This was the treatment reserved for the weak.

The great boat moved slowly, breaking waves after waves on the gentle river. It followed the flow and sailed toward Blessed Peace.

There were only a few rooms on the dragon boat's top layer, the doors to them all tightly shut. There was only Li Qingshan walking here and there on the deck, admiring the wide landscapes on both shores of the river. The sight was almost too much for his eyes to

take, immediately pushing the matter earlier to the back of his mind.

The boat sailed into the night. Li Qingshan sat in meditation inside his room and cultivated. He was in the possession of four techniques right now, the [Bull Demon Strong Fist], the [Tiger Demon Bone Refining Fist], the [Spirit Turtle Sea Guarding Secrets], and the [Innate Qi Refining Secrets]. All of them were separated in nine layers. His cultivation was at the first layer in each of them. The former ones belonged to the category of supernatural skills from the way of monsters and demons. They became the harder the deeper one went, and the time required also increased geometrically.

When it came to the [Innate Qi Refining Secrets] however, the speed of progress was much faster because it was a human technique, a bottom-level one on top of that. Li Qingshan invested much energy in it in order to obtain the things inside the Sumeru ring. The rate he refined his vitality and turned it into qi was astonishing thanks to his formidable physique. He wasn't far from the second layer after several days' worth of effort.

Little An had no way of cultivating though. Instead he squatted in a corner of the room and read a book. There were two bookcases inside the room, containing many leisure books containing verses, poetic songs, and the likes. There were also some commonly seen Daoist scriptures and Buddhist texts. The book Little An was reading was precisely a Buddhist scripture.

That senior monk who'd striven for the realm of the Bodhisattvas had entered the way of the demons, and the [Dao of the Beautiful Bones] was also a supernatural skill from the way of the demons. But in essence it'd still been evolved from the Dharma, so of course he had to carefully comprehend it. The bloody flames inside his eye sockets illuminated the words on the book. The scene was rather strange.

He suddenly raised his head. Li Qingshan also opened his eyes

and looked at the door. They both sensed it, one thanks to his keen perception toward the vitality of the living, one thanks to his six consciousnesses as powerful as a monster.

The silhouette of a man secretly climbed to the top floor of the dragon boat and came in front of Li Qingshan's door, the desire for murder overflowing from his eyes.

Qian Rongming was actually convinced he didn't make the slightest sound and didn't expose the slightest aura. Of course he wasn't worried about Li Qingshan, but about that qi refining warrior next door. He only wanted to butcher Li Qingshan tonight. He viciously thought in his mind he ought to have killed him the first time they met.

As to the qi refining warrior next door, he'd also made his plans. He would definitely take out his trump cards and make him suffer during the Eagle Wolf Guard's martial contest. Or maybe it wouldn't be too late for revenge after becoming an Eagle Wolf guard.

In the room next door to Li Qingshan, a sensation likewise flashed in that black-faced man's mind. But he didn't plan on acting. Li Qingshan was merely a small insignificant character for him. Moreover he also ignorantly antagonized qi refining warriors and didn't listen to his advice either, so it would be well deserved even if he were to die.

He was considering whether he should make something out of this matter, take advantage of Qian Rongming being alone to kill him. Someone from Ancient Wind City's Qian clan would certainly have some good stuff on him. Then he could go below and kill Qian Rongzhi. He would be more confident about this journey after that. His lips curved up slightly; he quietly stood up.

The door opened slightly ajar and Qian Rongming flashed inside. He lifted his right hand when he saw Li Qingshan on the bed. He maneuvered his true qi and shot his hand down in a slap. A stuffy

bang sounded. Qian Rongming exposed a happy smile.

“What are you smiling for?” Li Qingshan suddenly opened his eyes, a red light suddenly emerging inside them.

Qian Rongming was suddenly greatly startled inside. Muscles all over his body stretched taut as he was about to launch a series of attacks, but then his body loosened again. He looked with disbelief at his chest. The tip of a sword had pierced through his heart.

He couldn't believe that he had been sneak-attacked. What was even more fearful was that he couldn't sense the existence of that person behind him even now. It was only possible not to leak out the slightest aura if that person didn't breathe and his heart didn't beat. In the end he struggled to turn his head back and witness the last scene of his entire life, a skeleton with flames burning inside its eyes. The Cremation Blood Fire spread to his whole body, melting him into a part of the bloody fire.

It wasn't that Qian Rongming was too weak or too careless. Little An's present strength was simply at least equivalent to a qi warrior of the third or fourth level. Under the suppression of absolute strength, together to the sneak attack, it would have been strange instead if he weren't killed in a single strike.

Li Qingshan sighed softly and said, “Why go as far as killing for the sake of a few unpleasant words? Are you too arrogant, or am I too low-key?” Li Qingshan already had had the strength to kill him back then at the restaurant, but he hadn't done anything, not because he was afraid of trouble but because he didn't want to kill indiscriminately. Those who killed for the sake of a few unpleasing words were mere brutes. He wanted to kill with good reasons when he did kill. But perhaps others didn't think so. Perhaps he truly was a cricket among many in their eyes, someone that could naturally be stepped on whenever they wanted to step on him.

He casually examined his spoils of war, but he didn't find the spiritual pills or talismans he'd imagined. He found a black

brocade sack instead that looked a little familiar. It was dim and worn to extreme shabbiness, with even many spots cracked open on its surface. It seemed really incongruous on a pampered noble son like Qian Rongming.

An idea struck Li Qingshan. He poured his meager spiritual qi inside the brocade sack. A wonderful space suddenly opened inside his awareness. He seemed to be looking at a small imaginary case filled with various kinds of things inside.

There was naturally no lack of silver notes. There were also several small bottles as well as several talismans. The things inside appeared inside his hands with a thought.

Li Qingshan was delighted. It turned out to be a Hundred Treasures Bag from the legends. He'd inquired from Yan Song about quite a lot of common knowledge about qi refining warriors. He'd learned that a Sumeru ring was something only truly mighty cultivators could possess, with an extremely vast space inside. As to exactly how vast, he'd only heard about it and never seen it for himself. It would be rare for an ordinary qi refining warrior to have a Hundred Treasures Bag already.

The reason why this embroidered bag seemed familiar to him was because he'd already seen the like on the Red Eagle Captain Wang Pushi. However that Hundred Treasures Bag on Wang Pushi looked so much better than this one, and presumably its storage space was also much bigger. One didn't need to think too much to know that the one on Qian Rongming was a substandard product. It couldn't even store a somewhat longer spiritual weapon.

But even a substandard Hundred Treasures Bag was extremely rare. At least a qi refining warrior at the second level like Yan Song didn't have one. Qian Rongming was indeed worthy of coming from a so-called great clan, he really had some stuff on him.

Li Qingshan checked the things inside the Hundred Treasures Bag. Among these several bottles, one contained healing medicine

and three contained qi condensing pills. These weren't knock-off medicine refined by ordinary men of the martial world. These were true spiritual pills. If one were to compare them to the ones Halfmoon had given him, then of course the difference between them would be as great as the distance between the sky and the earth, but they were still real and genuine spiritual pills used by qi refining warriors. They were what Li Qingshan most needed right now.



# Chapter 111

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The three yellow talismans with unknown effects were probably Qian Rongming's so-called trump cards. Li Qingshan had learned from Yan Song that talismans were also separated in different levels of quality. The three talismans were yellow ones, but the spiritual light on them was much more abundant compared to the ones in Li Qingshan's possession. They were at least low-quality or perhaps medium-quality. His perception and judgment in this domain was still very lacking.

The talismans or spiritual devices ordinary people from the martial world could buy with money were mostly dreg level products that were manufactured by novices who'd just learned how to refine weapons or inscribe talismans. Ordinary people wouldn't even be able to make use of genuine beginner level spiritual talismans or spiritual devices even if they managed to procure them. At the very least it was difficult triggering a low-quality spiritual talisman by biting one's tongue and spraying blood on it.

At long long last he wouldn't need to carry all these random bits and pieces on his person anymore. Apart from the Sumeru ring that wouldn't go inside, Li Qingshan put all his belongings in the Hundred Treasures Bag. Examining his own properties added to Qian Rongming's silver, he had a total of seventy to eighty thousand taels of silver, several talismans, and three bottles of qi condensing pills. That was even discounting little things like healing pills.

However the most precious thing he had on him apart from the Sumeru ring wasn't among these. It was the monster core he'd gotten from the great mouse general inside the Boundless Mountains. Halfmoon naturally didn't care for it, hence she left it for Li Qingshan.

Li Qingshan had no idea how he should take it. He didn't dare

recklessly eat this thing, so he'd kept it around inside a small bottle all this time. He took it and once again admired it for a while before putting it inside the Hundred Treasures Bag. Finally he put the [Hundred Treasures Bag](#) inside his clothes.

The Hundred Treasures Bag is maybe more accurately called the Hundred Treasures Purse, but it sounded a little too feminine to me.

A great increase in the assets on hand was truly a great feeling. Li Qingshan's heart of murder had been stirred; he considered whether he should go all in, go look for that Qian Rongzhi to cut the weeds and pull the roots. One had to say one could become addicted to killing for wealth. Why was mankind always fighting endless wars? Because it was far much easier to snatch from others rather than to build with your own hands.

He forcibly suppressed this idea as soon as it came however. It wasn't because of compassion and benevolence, but because he worried that the murderous facet of his nature would be greatly stirred in that case, to the point he would also get rid of that black-faced man at the same occasion in order to snatch his things.

He absolutely had this strength. He wouldn't even need to release his monster power, it would be enough as long as he joined hands with Little An. If on one hand someone had something you wanted on them, and on the other you also had the strength to snatch it, and then you wouldn't even need to pay any price on top of that. In that case, how many people would be able to repress the voracious greed inside their hearts.

Even with the repression of the [Spirit Turtle Sea Guarding Secrets], the primitive instinct at the bottom of his heart was still entirely like that of a demon, and it urged him to do so. But to allow free rein to his instinct truly wasn't the dao he searched for. He was continuously learning how to master his power at the same time this power constantly grew mightier, for the sake of preserving his own heart and mind.

He realized something else at the same time, about how terrible a person would become after acquiring great power. Qian Rongming probably had had the same kinds of thoughts. He could casually kill Li Qingshan and not pay any price for it, effortlessly venting his anger. It was simply as easy as eating a meal or drinking a glass of water.

The dangers awaiting on the road of cultivation in this human world were probably even above those inside the Boundless Mountains. Li Qingshan pushed these distracting thoughts away. If that Qian Rongming didn't come to provoke him then that was that. If she dared to come, then he'd kill her as well. There was no particular need to bother looking for her himself at this time.

He took the bones on the floor together with the clothes and carried them outside the room, ready to throw them into the river and erase all the traces. But as soon as he opened his door, he saw the black-faced man look at him with a face full of disbelief, look at the bones in his arms.

"What a coincidence!" Li Qingshan was slightly startled, then he sent a greeting with a smile and walked around the black-faced man. He tossed the bundle in his arms inside the pitch-black river, so easy and relaxed it seemed he wasn't tossing a corpse but enjoying the sight of the night instead. This wasn't actually because his mental fortitude far surpassed that of ordinary people, but because of the calmness of one secure in his own strength.

The black-faced man's body stiffened all over. He clenched his fists then loosened them again. There was no longer any contempt in his eyes when he looked at Li Qingshan now. They were filled with vigilance instead, and even a trace of dread.

He'd stood in observation in a dark corner outside all along, ready to seize the opportunity to launch an ambush. But the one who'd walked out of the room wasn't actually Qian Rongming but the Li Qingshan who was already dead for certain in his imagination. There was no need to ask the identity of the eerie

white skeleton. Yet it would have been very difficult even for him to achieve a kill in a single strike, even with a sneak attack. This wasn't a duck or a chicken, but a qi refining warrior ten times more ferocious than even tigers or lions.

He very wanted to ask how Li Qingshan did it, but then no word came out when he looked at Li Qingshan's smile. What was even more frightening was that he couldn't sense the existence of qi on Li Qingshan even now. It was precisely the so-called unknown that the most fearful.

After successfully tossing the corpse away, Li Qingshan once again said to the black-faced man, "What are you called?"

There was no longer any trace of disdain in the black-faced man as he answered with caution, "Diao Fei." He had the nagging feeling the present Li Qingshan was a little different than during daytime. This young man seemed to be hiding something terrible about him. Of course, it was possible this was mere illusion.

Li Qingshan said, "You're going to Blessed Peace City to be an Eagle Wolf guard?"

"Yes!"

"What a coincidence, me too!"

Diao Fei's mind braced taut, readying himself to deal with any attack.

But Li Qingshan clearly didn't have such intent. He continued to chat, "How many people will the Eagle Wolf Guard recruit this time?"

"Three!"

"So few."

Diao Fei stayed silent.

Li Qingshan had wanted to inquire more information out of him at first, but he shrugged his shoulders and went back to his room

when he saw the other side standing on full alert.

Diao Fei suddenly said, “May I ask your excellency’s honored name?” This young man might be a rival once they arrived in Blessed Peace.

“Li Qingshan!”

It seemed he’d heard the name somewhere. Diao Fei thought for a while but from beginning to end he couldn’t remember where he’d heard this name from. He also returned to his room, then he didn’t sleep for the entire night, staying on his guard at all times.

A feeling came to Li Qingshan as soon as he returned to his room. He opened the windows and looked in the distance. He saw a silhouette leap down from the boat when the boat sailed close to the shore, then fall on a patch of sandbank and quickly disappear inside a dense forest. Judging from its stature, it was precisely Qian Rongzhi.

Li Qingshan sighed with emotion. This woman’s decisive thinking was truly good. In all likelihood she’d realized something was wrong when Qian Rongming didn’t go back, hence she directly jumped ship and made her escape without even making inquiries or investigations.

He shook his head and put this matter aside. Li Qingshan took out a bottle of qi condensing pills. He opened it and found out there were only three pills inside, each of them the size of a longan. He took one out and started cultivating.

The speed of his cultivation indeed became a little faster with the external assistance of a pill. The medicinal power nourished the true qi. The true qi circulated a full turn inside the body in the space of a breathe in and a breathe out. Time passed fleeting. His body very quickly refined one qi condensing pill, then Li Qingshan took out another qi condensing pill and swallowed it down.

Another qi refining warrior would certainly be dumbfounded if

they saw this. How could one eat spiritual pills like beans and candies. Pills could greatly increase the speed of cultivation, but that didn't mean that someone could simply become a master just because they had spiritual pills and immortal herbs. Talent, efforts, the teachings of a master, and even luck were all indispensable.

Moreover, there was a limit to how many pills one could eat. It wasn't as simple as eating as many pills as one had and then entirely transforming them into power, otherwise genuine pill refining masters would all be powerhouses unrivaled in the world. For example, Qian Rongming's nine qi condensing pills were originally his dose for three months. He'd take one every ten days and slowly convert the medicinal power.

Even this was for someone the clan put value on who ate them somewhat faster. The normal speed would be two pills a month to guarantee the medicinal power wouldn't be wasted in the slightest. Who would eat them the way Li Qingshan did.

It was impossible for the medicinal power from a single trivial qi condensing pill to stay ten days inside his body. He had to fight for seconds and minutes, racing against time to transform it into true qi, or else it would be snatched by his monster core and forcibly turned into monster qi if he were to delay a little. He could be assured none of it would be wasted.

Li Qingshan naturally didn't know all this. He was still happily thinking that eating pills indeed made his training go faster. He logically cultivated the [Innate Qi Refining Secrets] to the second layer by the time he'd eaten down his seventh qi condensing pill. He didn't feel any bottleneck whatsoever thanks to the Sumeru ring purifying his true qi.

He stood up and felt a true qi pure to the extreme flow inside his body like a vast and mighty river. His entire body seemed to have become much lithier.

He collected the two qi condensing pills left. His acute hearing could hear noises and voices in the distance. The boat also became noisy, and he vaguely heard many people say, “We’ve reached Blessed Peace City!”

Li Qingshan hurriedly went out to take a look. He saw the decks below already covered in people. A great mountain barred the way of the great river, forcing it to bend around.

A grand city sitting between rivers and mountains emerged in Li Qingshan’s vision when they went past the bend. To be accurate, it couldn’t be called a city because there were simply no city walls around it. It was a little closer to a modern metropolis.

Here was the confluence of two great rivers. The Yi river flowed into the Clear River in this place. Blessed Peace spread out on the shores of the two rivers. Row upon row of houses, buildings, high towers, monasteries, and Daoist temples extended without limit on the earth in each and every direction, with boundless golden fields beyond them. Great flocks of birds danced free in the blue sky above the city.

Li Qingshan never saw ancient cities, but he was confident the metropolis in front of his eyes was vaster and more thriving than famous flourishing places in antiquity like [Hangzhou](#) and [Yangzhou](#). The lack of city walls was proof of the rulers’ absolute confidence in not depending on earth and stone to defend themselves.

Hangzhou and Yangzhou are two cities in southern China that both served as (short-lived in Yangzhou’s case) capital of southern China.

Only small cities like Suncheer would have city walls to defend them against the attacks from bandits and mountain brigands. No genuine great city had built a city wall. These were metropolises ruled by qi refining warriors. If there were truly enemies that could pose a threat to such a city, then they wouldn’t be stopped

by mere walls of stone. A wall would only disturb the development of the city instead.

Li Qingshan finally understood why Ye Dachuan was so delighted when he learned he could be a county commissioner here. Being a small official in this place was so much more powerful than being in Suncheer. Then just how flourishing would be the Clear River City that governed the entire Clear River province? He couldn't even imagine how the Ruyi region capital would look like, even more so.

Everything in front of his eyes made him understand that here wasn't a simple ancient world. The existence of qi refining warriors deeply influenced everything in this world, shrouding it in a layer of mystical flavor, just like in the legends.

The dragon boat berthed at the dock. Li Qingshan disembarked from the boat together with the flow of men. He thought before of asking Diao Fei or someone about the whereabouts of the Eagle Wolf Guard, but now he knew after arriving that wouldn't be necessary.



# Chapter 112

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On a mountain peak at the northern side of the city, an iron eagle molded from black iron spread out its iron wings more than a hundred feet wide as it stamped on a stone platform several dozen feet tall, overlooking the whole of Blessed Peace City. It seemed to declare clear and loud that this city was monitored and defended by the Eagle Wolf Guard, filled with arrogance rather than any attempt at discretion. Whether you were a man of the rivers and lakes or a qi refining warrior, you had to act cautious and careful under the gaze of this eagle.

Li Qingshan disembarked from the boat then directly dashed toward the mountain peak without saying anything. A building sat below that iron eagle spreading its wings. It was precisely the location of the Eagle Wolf Guard. Diao Fei tailed behind him as soon as he disembarked from the boat. His eyes had become firm again. No matter what strength Li Qingshan was hiding, it couldn't disturb his determination to become an Eagle Wolf guard.

Li Qingshan advanced along the neatly arranged stone steps. The thick forest shades on both sides seemed to hide the sky above from prying eyes. The mountain peak wasn't very tall, a mere thousand feet. There was no way to compare it to those great mountains inside the Boundless Mountain Ranges, but his heart seemed to widen once again when he turned his head back and looked down on Blessed Peace City below his feet.

A tall stone arch stood at the end of the stone steps. The calligraphy of three words "Eagle Wolf Guard" were handwritten on it with wanton flamboyance. There was a vast plaza after crossing past this arch, and that eagle sat in the middle of it. He couldn't feel it from the distance, but he could sense the awe-inspiring aura of this iron eagle now that he was nearing, especially that pair of eagle eyes that seemed to be staring at people like a living creature. Eleven equally flamboyant words were

inscribed on the stone platform under his feet: “The eagle overlooks the world, the wolf watches the nine provinces.”

Eagles observers didn’t require too many explanations. They overlooked the earth like an eagle hovering in the sky. As to the observing wolf, it described an attitude. Ordinary people would certainly turn their bodies and look back if someone were to call their name behind them. To turn the head but not the body was called [looking like a watchful wolf](#), and people who acted such were often deceitful or paranoid.

These eleven words were not only filled with a pride that overflowed from the sky. They also describe the role of the Eagle Wolf Guard in vivid strokes. Li Qingshan didn’t understand calligraphy, but he still could immediately see that these eleven words were written by the same hand that’d written the three words “Eagle Wolf Guard.” There was an inimitable grand tyrannical aura and a loftiness that could swallow the world, sweeping away everything under the sun. They brought even more shock to the heart and soul of men than that huge iron eagle sculpture.

A young man clothed in green came up before Li Qingshan had had time to carefully examine them. “You must also have come to apply to the Eagle Wolf Guard!”

Li Qingshan didn’t sense any sign of martial arts or qi refining on him. He was presumably a mere attendant or perhaps the kind of small role here to receive guests, but his person actually carried an air of command about him. The gatekeeper of a prime minister was indeed like [an official of the seventh rank](#).

Li Qingshan said, “Indeed.”

The green-clothed attendant observed Li Qingshan puzzledly. He saw Li Qingshan’s calm and unperturbed appearance and softly said, “Come with me then!” He led Li Qingshan in front of a great hall. “Go in, everyone is inside. When you go in you have to first

note down your name and cultivation level.”

Li Qingshan trod inside the great hall. Many eyes immediately fell on him, every gaze sharp like swords and sabers.

Li Qingshan saw more than twenty persons inside the great hall. Some were men and some were women, some were young and some were old. Some were in groups of three to five and some sat alone in meditation. Each and every one of them was a qi refining warrior. Most of their gazes were unfriendly when they looked at Li Qingshan. Some raised their eyebrows in ridicule, happily pointing at him and commenting to their companions, some exposed disdain and immediately turned their eyes away. There were also one or two persons who looked at him with a little suspicion.

This was the first time Li Qingshan saw so many qi refining warriors, and there was an excitement he couldn't put into words inside his chest. He finally came into contact with the community of cultivators in this world.

In truth, Halfmoon had already ferociously thrown him into it, but these people were all formidably strong like freaks. He could only look up at them with despair and hope. There was no sense of reality when the difference was too great. Only now could he look at these people as equal, or perhaps even look down at them from above.

Li Qingshan saw several dozen wooden plaques hanging on the walls of the great hall with names written on them. He threw them a glance and came in front a long table at a corner of the hall. An emissary was writing bent over the desk. He said without even looking up, “Name, origin, master, cultivation. Remember, you can't hide anything, otherwise if you're found out...”

The emissary didn't continue further but the threat in his words were implicitly obvious. Li Qingshan only understood then why these people would stay in this place. They wanted to gather

information about newly arrived rivals.

Li Qingshan originally wanted to take out the dark wolf badge, go meet that dark wolf captain Zhuo Zhibo, and directly enter the Eagle Wolf Guard. But against all expectations he couldn't even see a single genuine Eagle Wolf guard around, only a few green-clothed attendants receiving guests. He temporarily put his original idea on hold. It just happened he wanted to properly observe the proceedings. Anyway he would meet with the real master sooner or later. He wouldn't believe Zhuo Zhibo wouldn't make an appearance at such an important event.

“Li Qingshan, first level of qi refining...” said Li Qingshan.

Li Qingshan heard several sneers as soon as he said his cultivation level out loud.

“Coming to apply for the Eagle Wolf Guard at the first level of qi refining, this kid must be an idiot!”

“Go home and go suck on a teat for milk, this isn't the place for you.”

“Is he really at the first level of qi refining? It doesn't look like it to me, he couldn't be lying right?”

“He wouldn't be far from death if he's falsifying his cultivation level.”

The people inside this great hall were all at least at the second level of qi refining. Most of those with innate talent for qi refining would cultivate with painstaking care and come out only after breaking through to the second level. As to those who reached the innate realm after training internal strength, they would also use the true qi transformed from their internal strength to forcibly break through to the second level. Hence there were very few qi warriors at the first level traveling in the world.

Even the green-clothed emissary in charge of the records lifted his head. “Is that true? You can't register if you're not a qi refining

warrior.” He wasn’t a qi refining warrior himself, but he’d spend many years inside the Eagle Wolf Guard, so his vision was pretty decent. Li Qingshan simply didn’t look like a qi refining warrior to him.

Li Qingshan suddenly understood a malpractice of his. After he’d gone through the sinister dangers inside the Boundless Mountains, repressing the entire aura of his person with the [Spirit Turtle Sea Guarding Secrets] had almost become an instinctual behavior. It was so even after he managed to cultivate true qi.

Of course he had to repress his monster qi tight and could absolutely not let the slightest shred of it leak out. But there was no need to be so cautious about true qi. Displaying his identity as a qi refining warrior in due time ought to spare him quite a bit of trouble.

Hence, the aura of his entire person immediately changed. He no longer restrained or repressed his true qi and automatically released it, displaying the strength of a qi refining warrior at the first level.

What this lead to however was in fact roars of laughter across the entire room. Even these few suspicious eyes also finally withdrew their gazes and no longer regarded Li Qingshan as important. The unknown was frightening, [that was the reason a donkey could scare away a tiger](#). But when the donkey exhausted all his moves, it could only submit to a wretched fate.

The green-clothed emissary also put down his pen and let out a smile. “I see you’re truly young. It’s not easy having your talent. It would be better for you to go back home and cultivate for several years. Come out only after breaking through the second level. There will be dangers in this contest.”

Li Qingshan ignored these mocking laughs. He expressed his thanks to this benevolent warning, then he confidently said, “I have faith in myself.”

The green-clothed emissary stayed noncommittal and proceeded to continue writing.

No clan, no sect, no master, this was Li Qingshan curriculum vitae.

The emissary noted it down in not much of a time. He raised his head and said, “The contest starts three days later. If you go out there will naturally be someone who’ll arrange a place to stay for you. You can also stay here if you want.”

Another attendant lifted a wooden plaque and hung it at the end of that tall wall together with other names. Of course the information on it wasn’t very detailed. There was only a name written on the front and the cultivation level written on the back.

It made Li Qingshan sigh with lament. For a qi refining warrior, any origin or master was all falsehood. Your true strength was your only business card, the thing that people put value on.

When he turned around, he looked at the group of qi refining warriors with the same gaze he would use to look at garbage. Then he shook his head and said especially to the few people who’d loudly derided him, “Garbage.” Haughtiness was his innate disposition, mocking the herd was his innate gift.

A qi refining warrior said in anger, “Who are you talking about?” He was the one who told Li Qingshan to go back and suck on a teat earlier.

Li Qingshan said, “I’m talking about whoever replies.” Those who hadn’t wagged their tongues at him would naturally not think they were the ones Li Qingshan was cursing at.

The qi refining warrior’s body flashed in front of Li Qingshan. He abruptly lifted his hand and amassed his true qi. The attendant in charge of the records said, “Those who fight private battles on the mountain will be executed with no trial.”

The hand of that qi refining warrior trembled a few times. In the

end he let his arm fall down.

The rules of the Eagle Wolf Guard were no joke. There was no mention of lodging during the Eagle Wolf Guard earliest bouts of recruitment. You only had to show up the day of the contest, but afterwards there were many people who couldn't show up.

The qi refining warriors lived inside Blessed Peace city. It could be said that they showed no scruple and stopped at no crime in order to get rid of their opposition, whether by poison, ganging on someone, or through assassination. The results were often decided before it even officially began. That was why the rules had been changed. Everyone who came to apply lived on the mountain, and no one was allowed to use any mean to attack anyone else. They would be extinguished without trial if they were to act in any way.

Li Qingshan said, "Come bite me, moron!" There was a saying, what was it again. [This bro's low profile isn't open house for you to act the smartass](#). A tooth for a tooth, an eye for an eye, that was the standard he lived his life by. You know how to swear, but my mouth isn't dim-witted either!

That qi refining warrior was so angry he actually smiled instead. "Three days later, you'll know what's called not knowing life from death."

There were several other qi refining warriors who also snickered repeatedly.

Diao Fei walked into the great hall at this moment. He glanced at Li Qingshan then watched the tall walls, then sighed in relief. It seemed Li Qingshan's cultivation was indeed at the first level of qi refining. He'd merely used some kind of method to hide his cultivation and make him frightened. But it was still a mystery to him what method Li Qingshan had used to kill Qian Rongming, so he didn't dare be careless.

The other people inside the hall no longer paid attention to Li Qingshan after seeing Diao Fei. A master at the third level of qi

refining was a formidable opponent in this contest, and they had to carefully observe him. Li Qingshan merely played the role of a clown in comparison. The time of his death was already near and he wasn't worth caring about.

Li Qingshan didn't stay any longer in the hall. He went out of the gates. An attendant led him up the mountain, past foliage and vegetation, birdsong and fragrant flower, all having gone through the care of a great gardening master. There was a new scenery every three steps; the beauty surpassed the imagination.

The green-clothed attendant pointed to a room when they came in front of a building and said, "This is where you live. You must already know that no private fighting is allowed on the mountain. Three meals a day, you can come to the rear of the hall to eat. You can call for us if you have any request, and we'll do our utmost to satisfy you as long as it's not excessive." The attitude was very average, but the service was definitely thoughtful.

The "appearance of a watchful wolf" is a Chinese saying based on the habit of wolves to always look left and right or behind when they travel. Ancient Chinese people very disliked wolves, so they came to associate this attitude with deceit etc.

"A prime minister's gatekeeper is equivalent to an official of the seventh rank" is a saying in ancient China. It shouldn't be too hard to understand, the gatekeeper has power over who can go in and who can't, etc. "Seventh rank" refers to the nine ranks of officialdom, with rank one the highest.

The story of the donkey and the tiger is a reference to the Chinese fable "The Donkey of Qian." There were no donkeys in Qian until a man let one loose there one day. A tiger saw it and thought it was a mighty beast because of its size, so it was terrified of it, until the day he finally dared to prod it. The donkey kicked the tiger, and then the tiger finally realized the donkey was nothing formidable and ended up eating it.



Okay I spent two hours on this line and still couldn't come up with anything good. -\_-It basically means "It's not because I (this bro) act low key that it gives you the qualification to act pretentious/play the poser. Something something, except spewed out in slang by some Chinese rapper/techno MC thing.

# Chapter 113

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Li Qingshan ate the two qi condensing pills left once he went inside his room. However the [Innate Qi Refining Secrets] was also harder the higher one cultivated, and the feeling of growth wasn't very obvious anymore this time even with the two pills. Of course, one couldn't not mention the snatching and tempering from the monster core and the Sumeru ring.

He wasn't aware that Qian Rongzhi also had come to the great hall after his departure. She lowered her head when she saw Diao Fei and concealed the hatred in her eyes before also leaving her name behind. She thought Diao Fei had been the one to kill Qian Rongming; one who could kill a qi refining warrior was naturally another qi refining warrior. She didn't go ask however.

Diao Fei was innocent but he didn't offer any explanation either. It would look as if he were afraid of her if he did.

Li Qingshan went to the rear hall at noon. It was more or less fully filled with people sitting there. The exquisite pear wood tables were so smooth they could reflect a man's face. A faint flowery fragrance came from somewhere. Every window was open, and outside the windows were garden views resembling landscape paintings quiet and beautiful in their extreme elegance.

Pleasing dishes were carried out one after another and laid on long tables. Everyone could help themselves to them, like the buffets of his former world. But the quality of the food was actually very good, comparable to the [Manchu Han imperial feast of the legends](#). Li Qingshan had eaten quite a few dishes made by so-called great chefs on his way out of Suncheer, but they were simply apprentices compared to this Eagle Wolf Guard chef. Many dishes made from rare and precious ingredients spread all over the long tables.

The Manchu Han imperial feast was a grand feast during the

Qing dynasty that occurred for three whole days and comprised of over 300 dishes. Held in honor of the Kangxi Emperor's 66th birthday, as a way to resolve tension between the Han and the Manchu people after the conquest of China by the Manchus.

Li Qingshan understood increasingly better why so many qi refining warriors wanted to join the Eagle Wolf Guard. Not to mention anything else, just the food was an enjoyment fit for kings and emperors. He ate without restraint, once again attracting quite a few supercilious looks. Many qi refining warriors came from great clans or sects, so they naturally wouldn't be so inexperienced in the ways of the world like him. Even if Li Qingshan was already keeping a lid on the amount of food he took in order to make him appear like a human, others still secretly despised him as a hungry ghost.

Li Qingshan was in the middle of eating a dish made from some unknown fish when a figure flashed in front of him. Diao Fei sat opposite him and organized his words. "Your aura restraining technique is very brilliant. I couldn't tell anything at first." He seemed to be much more relaxed now and not so much on his guards, perhaps because he was confident no one would dare violate the rules of the Eagle Wolf Guard.

Li Qingshan said with a smile, "It's mostly because I'm too weak!"

Diao Fei's mouth twitched. One who could kill a qi refining warrior of the second level with no sound or breath and leave only a frightful skeleton behind, could he truly be weak? He had suspicions Li Qingshan cultivated techniques from the way of the demons, hence he didn't want to expose himself to others. Pity that Qian Rongming who believed he was a genuine pushover and tossed his life away therein.

Li Qingshan said, "Looking at your appearance, it must not be your first time here!"

Diao Fei said, “Keen vision, this is my second time.”

Then he fell silent.

Li Qingshan said, “Right, do you have qi condensing pills?”

Diao Fei said, “Of course I do, why?” Qi refining pills were the most commonly used pills by qi refining warriors. If talking about precious of course they were very precious, but they were very commonly seen.

Li Qingshan wiped his mouth and pushed the tableware to one side. “How about you sell them to me?”

Diao Fei said, “If you’re talking about silver, then I’ll have to excuse myself.”

It indeed wasn’t outside of Li Qingshan’s expectations. Mundane silver and gold were already mostly meaningless for qi refining warriors.

Li Qingshan said, “Of course it’s not silver, I’m talking about talismans.”

“What!” Diao Fei was astounded. There wasn’t any qi refining warrior who didn’t carry a few talismans on them. Even more so for this contest for which he’d made the most ample of preparations. These were qi refining warriors’ trump cards, or even a second life for them. Selling talismans on the eve of the contest was the same as selling the weapons on one’s hand before the start of the war, it was simply outrageously unimaginable.

Li Qingshan immediately took out all the talismans from the Hundred Treasures Bag and spread them on the table one by one. He was also very confident in the security offered by the Eagle Wolf Guard. He asked, “How about it?”

This immediately attracted the eyes of everyone inside the hall, not only Diao Fei.

Diao Fei’s breathing marked a faint pause. Apart from two dreg-

level talismans, the others were all low-quality, and the most surprising was that there was even a medium-quality Thunder Strike Talisman. This was a divine item that could overturn the tide and transform defeat into victory at a crucial moment! Even a qi refining warrior of the third level would sustain heavy injuries with a slight moment of carelessness, or even be directly killed.

“One talisman for one pill.” Diao Fei immediately stretched his hand to take the talismans. He could be guaranteed to obtain victory as long as he had these talismans.

Li Qingshan took the talismans back and said with a faint smile, “This price seems a little low.”

“I’m offering fifteen qi condensing pills to buy all your talismans.” A green-clothed qi refining warrior beside them suddenly opened his mouth. He was young but wore luxurious clothes. One could see at a glance he came from an influential clan.

Li Qingshan spread out his hands at Diao Fei and said, “Look, someone raised the price.” The reason he chose to do business in a public area with many people present was precisely because he was unaware of standard prices.

Just as this qi refining warrior’s voice fell, someone else said, “I bid fifteen qi condensing pills for a single talisman of yours.”

Li Qingshan was a little flabbergast. He looked at that talisman in his hands. He knew spiritual qi was richest on such a talisman, but he still didn’t think it could be worth so many qi condensing pills.

Many qi refining warriors surrounded them. Their eyes each glittered with bright light. Li Qingshan was confident he would already be under siege were it not for them being inside the Eagle Wolf Guard. Now no one even dared to say malicious words to his face. There were even two people among those who’d mocked him earlier who thickened their facial skins and came forward as well.

That qi refining warrior who’d directly clashed with Li Qingshan

cursed a “moron” in a low voice, his face unsightly as his heart became all the more vicious. “Let’s see how you die without these talismans.”

How would he know Li Qingshan’s intentions. He was simply not planning on participating in this contest at all. His brain would have to be flooded with water before he became ignorant of how to use the promise Wang Pushi made to him. Li Qingshan had enough trump cards in his hands in any case, hence these few talismans simply didn’t amount to much at all. The most important thing was to exchange them with spiritual pills and quickly transform them into his own strength.

Li Qingshan stood up and said in a loud voice, “Everyone please be calm. I’ll sell all these talismans, they will go to the highest bidder. We exchange pills in one hand and talismans in the other, fair trade for young and old alike. First is this Clear Breeze Talisman...” He separated the talismans on hand by levels following the amount of spiritual qi on them, from the weakest to the strongest. Then he actually started an impromptu auction on the spot.

The green-clothed attendants in the hall raised their eyebrows one and all, but no one interfered. They’d just really never seen talismans being sold in this place.

Someone immediately answered, “I bid one qi condensing pill.”

“Two.”

Li Qingshan said, “Is there someone offering more?” Someone offered three only after he asked for a while, and no one offered another bid after that. It looked like dreg-level talismans weren’t very valued by qi refining warriors. He collected three qi condensing pills and exchanged them for the talisman.

In fact, the price of this talisman was already far superior to its normal value. It would be difficult to obtain even a single qi refining pill in ordinary times, because everyone clearly knew that

spiritual pills that could raise one's fundamental strength were the way of kings compared to these external aids.

But the situation was reversed at such times. You couldn't immediately enhance your strength no matter how many qi condensing pills you had. One more talisman, even a dreg-level one, could instantly lift your strength by a little and offer a little more guarantee in the contest to come. If you didn't buy them yourself, they could very possibly be obtained by your opponents and become tools to defeat or even kill you. Even the lowest-level dreg talisman could be the straw that breaks the camel's back.

On one side was a beautiful future awaiting after joining the Eagle Wolf Guard, and on the other side was the wretched misery of death or defeat. They truly couldn't help but give it their all.

The atmosphere gradually heated up when Li Qingshan started selling low-quality talismans. The amount of qi condensing pills started to surpass five. Li Qingshan obtained nearly fifty qi condensing pills by the time he sold all the talismans except for the medium-quality Thunder Strike Talisman. He found out that the size of qi condensing pills wasn't always identical. There were many that were only as big as peanuts, and one porcelain bottle could store more than a dozen of them.

It turned out that spiritual pills weren't perfectly round pills when they were refined, but paste-shaped. Then pill refining masters would process them into pills according to the norm. Pills coming from pill refining masters without enough ability would have a weaker medicinal quality, so they had to make them a little bigger in order to ensure consistency in medicinal quality and adhere to the standards for qi condensing pills.

Many qi refining warriors hadn't offered a single bid from beginning to end. Their eyes suddenly lit up when Li Qingshan took out the last medium-quality talisman.

“Ten qi condensing pills.”

“Twenty.”

“Twenty five.”

The price broke through all previous records in an instant. This talisman was a talisman that could genuinely influence the tide of battle. It was also what Qian Rongming had counted on to challenge qi refining warriors at the third level. Whoever obtained this talisman would see their odds of success rise by at least a third. Many of them were determined to obtain it.

Li Qingshan's face beamed in delight. It would be very easy to break through to the third layer of the [Innate Qi Refining Secrets] with the help of these qi condensing pills. He suddenly turned his head around and saw Qian Rongzhi stand in front of the door, watching him with a face full of venom. She of course very clearly knew what talismans Qian Rongming had in his hands.

Li Qingshan gave a faint cold smile. He didn't get his way by bullying, hence he just came to kill. There was nothing to pity about Qian Rongming's demise. If this woman didn't know discretion, then he didn't mind sending her to see Qian Rongming again and be his companion on the road to the netherworld.

“I bid one pill.” Diao Fei suddenly opened his mouth after staying silent for a long while. He was greatly regretful at this moment. It would have been so much better if he'd traded with Li Qingshan back on the boat instead, why did he have to come to this step.

The whole hall became quiet and everyone looked at Diao Fei. The one who'd offered the highest bid right now coldly said, “You can't be joking right?” He was likewise a qi refining warrior of the third level and saw Diao Fei as a rival.

Diao Fei took out a porcelain bottle with extreme reluctance. “I bid one Pearl Dew Pill.”

“What, Pearl Dew Pill!” The crowd of qi refining warriors went into an uproar. It seemed this Pearl Dew Pill had quite a renown. Li



Qingshan exposed much curiosity. He wasn't aware that the value of a Pearl Dew Pill was truly too much above that of a medium-quality talisman.

The qi condensing pill was definitely not a top-notch medicine pill. However the ingredients it required were relatively easy to gather, the refining process was also relatively easy, and the medicinal quality was more or less stable as well. Those were the reasons it became popular and widespread, turning into an essential cultivation product for the great majority of qi refining warriors. The goal it pursued was decent quality at a bargain price.

There were in fact many better medicine pills. The only reason they were comparatively rare was perhaps because a certain ingredient was very difficult to collect, or perhaps because they required great skills from the pill refining master. However refining one of the them was comparable to several dozen qi condensing pills.

# Chapter 114

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Diao Fei originally meant to save it in order to unblock the Yang Linking Meridian and break through to the fourth level of qi refining. But no matter what he couldn't allow this Thunder Strike Talisman to fall into the hands of a rival. He could only resign himself to part with his beloved treasure.

Li Qingshan said to Diao Fei, "Let me take a look!"

Diao Fei poured the Pearl Dew Pill in his hand. A small medicine pill transparent like a drop of dew released dazzling luster. All the qi refining warriors around them struggled to hide the greed inside their eyes. A top-notch pill could help break through to a new realm at a critical time. It had indeed great uses and wasn't something qi condensing pills could compare to.

Li Qingshan was suddenly very regretful. Why didn't he get rid of those two back on the boat. Temptation of the devil, temptation of the devil! He said with a faint smile, "That's passable."

Passable? Diao Fei was very dissatisfied with this evaluation. This is a Pearl Dew Pill, you ever seen such a good pill? The other qi refining warriors also thought Li Qingshan was putting on an act.

How could he know that Li Qingshan had not only seen but also eaten many. Only now did he realize increasingly clearer how good Halfmoon had been to him. He didn't know the names of those pills Halfmoon had given him, but any one among them was much better than this Pearl Dew Pill that sent this group of qi refining warriors into a frenzy of greed. Sigh, how was that gal doing by now?

Atchoo

A black spirit cat lying in a serene blue embrace sneezed ten thousand miles away. A jade hand gently caressed her fur glossy like flowing moonlight.

A soft and gentle voice anxiously said, “Little Moon, did you catch a cold?” She tightened her embrace at the same time and hugged Halfmoon close in her arms.

“I’m a cat monster, can cat monsters catch a cold? Use your head a little, meowstress!” Halfmoon struggled with all her might but couldn’t manage to get away.

“As long as you’re fine. Your body is too weak, come, better eat a pill!” Slender jade fingers took a spiritual pill and sent it to Halfmoon’s mouth. A pure and limpid spiritual light sparkled within as if it were crystal. Compared to it, qi condensing pills were pills of mud, and Pearl Bead Pills were stones.

“Not eating not eating not eating!” Halfmoon shook her head left and right, struggling even more.

“Alright alright alright, not eating not eating.” She took back the spiritual pill, her pampering voice a little helpless. Just like a mother seeing her most beloved child, even her unruliness became a wonderful virtue in her eyes.

Halfmoon raised her head. She suddenly felt sad when she looked at that beautiful mien that seemed still clotted with sorrow even when faintly smiling. She’d caught her after escaping, but there hadn’t been a single word of scolding coming from her mouth. Instead she showered her with even more heartfelt care, such as illuminating her with moonlight or using endless amounts of spiritual pills. She was the one allowed her to transform into a monster capable of changing into a human shape from a small trivial spiritual cat.

Her heart suddenly remembered that tall figure carrying her on his back as he climbed that ice cliff in the middle of endless snow and wind, shedding two crystalline trails for her. I’m probably not a good pet!

Just like how a child could only understand the mind of a parent after having a child themselves, understand after investing time

and effort how much it'd taken for them to obtain everything they'd obtained.

“Mistress, I'll tell you a story!”

“Alright, I most like listening to Halfmoon telling stories!”

Mountains and clouds spread for ten thousand miles outside the windows. Two exotic beasts dragged the carriage, stamping over the sky.

Back to Blessed Peace, Li Qingshan had already gone back to his own room. He leisurely lay on his bed and calculated the day's profits.

More than fifty qi condensing pills, enough for his cultivation to break through to the third layer of the [Innate Qi Refining Secrets] during these three days, while that Pearl Bead Pill could be used to break through to the fourth level of the [Innate Qi Refining Secrets]. That was precisely the boundary between the first and second levels of qi refining, the unblocking of the first meridian.

Hence, Li Qingshan closed the door and once again began closed-door cultivation. This behavior of his was actually very commonly seen. Many qi refining warriors would use these three days on the eve of the battle to polish their spears and make their ultimate preparations, not stepping a single step outside the door.

Fifty qi condensing pills big and small went down his belly one by one. More than half of it was transformed into monster power, and the rest became a true qi pure to the extreme. He couldn't expose his true form and take look at the result, but Li Qingshan was confident his monster incarnation had become even taller and more majestic. It would be very hard to attain the same speed even if he were to live in seclusion inside the mountains, breathing in and out that spiritual qi between heaven and earth. The cultivation speed of monsters and demons was indeed far from matching that of humans. This was nature's sorrow, but Li Qingshan strove his best to use the ways of mankind to make up for this shortcoming.

Pills could be of assistance for cultivation, but they polluted true qi with dirt and made it lose its purity. Common qi refining warriors had to think of ways to temper their true qi in addition to refining medicinal power, hence the time they had to spend would naturally be much longer. Li Qingshan had the assistance from the Sumeru ring however, sparing him from this process, imperceptibly saving him who knew how much time. It actually increased the speed of his cultivation.

Li Qingshan quietly sat in meditation inside his room. Three days went past all of a sudden. He'd broken through the third layer of the [Innate Qi Refining Secrets] only after taking twenty four pills in one go, an amount that many a qi refining warrior would use during a whole year. He still wanted to continue cultivating at first, but the time of the contest had come and he had no choice but to stand up and go out. He noticed that a drizzle had unknowingly started to fall down from the sky.

He came to the location of the contest with the guidance of a green-robed attendant, a limestone plaza. The rules were very simple: the qi refining warriors were to go up one by one and duel. The winner went on and the loser was eliminated, all the way until the last 3. Those would be Eagle Wolf guards.

A crimson pavilion with cornices supported by interlocked beams stood at the end of the plaza, its color a little dimmed by the soak of the rain. Many silhouettes could be faintly discerned in that pavilion. The pitch black of the dark wolf uniform was a color Li Qingshan was familiar with. Li Qingshan finally had his first glimpse of this place's genuine masters after coming here for three days.

Apart from the Eagle Wolf guards, there also a few persons wearing everyday clothes leaning on the railings, very relaxedly conversing and laughing among themselves, fruits and pastries were arranged to the side. They simply seemed to be watching a good show, or perhaps one could say a gambling party.

Because Li Qingshan clearly heard them talk about the degree of strength or weakness of the qi refining warriors, talk about how much money they'd gambled, so free and easy they seemed to be talking about racing horses or fighting dogs.

A Dark Wolf guard with a brandy nose held a list of names with the cultivation levels and life information of each and every qi refining warriors on it. "The two third level qi refining warriors are bound to be in the last three, the only thing worth betting on is which one out of the second level qi refining warriors can rise about others."

The Dark Wolf guard beside him said softly while leaning on a pillar, "I bet it'll be that woman."

"Brandy Nose" looked at the list of names. "Qian Rongzhi? Why? Her strength can't be said to be formidable."

"A feeling," said this Dark Wolf guard with a smile. He didn't leak anything out, but his eyes were looking inside the pavilion.

"Brandy Nose" seemed to come to some sudden realization. He also started to smile in tacit understanding.

That Eagle Wolf guard suddenly said, "Hey, look at that kid, the one who's looking at us right now, the one at the first layer of qi refining. We might as well bet when he's going to die!"

"Then I'll bet on his first fight."

Two men sat face to face inside the pavilion. They could clearly see through the muslin curtains and observe the view of the field. A pot of green tea sat on the table, its clear fragrance permeating the entire room. Two beautiful maids stood beside.

One of them had a slightly plump body and wore the Dark Eagle uniform on him. He was precisely the Dark Eagle captain of Blessed Peace, Zhuo Zhibo. His eyes were narrowed into slits as he said smiling, "Lord Zhou, let us also have a small bet to cultivate our minds, how do you say?" He still seemed of middle age, but his real

age was at least over sixty. The reason he looked much younger was because he'd unblocked the four great Yin and Yang meridians and then broken through the Belt meridian, condensing a sea of qi.

Lord Zhou seemed even younger, looking not even thirty yet. He was dressed from head to toes like a scholar. A few strands of a long beard added a little gravitas to his appearance. He seemed just like an elegant scholar having gone through the great upheavals of life. He smiled and waved his hand, saying, "Not betting not betting. Wouldn't I be making a rod for my own back if I were to bet with you in your domain?" There was no smile inside him however. This guy was again showing off his martial strength, it was truly too repulsive.

In Blessed Peace, there was naturally only the county magistrate Zhou Wenbin who could sit on equal footing with Zhuo Zhibo. There had never been any place in the world where two people with equivalent authority could become affectionate and intimate. The two of them both had things they feared however, hence they divided their labors as not to encroach on each other's territory for the sake of preserving a superficial peace. Nevertheless they would still seize every opportunity to show off their own strength to the other party.

Zhou Wenbin ended up taking the register at Zhuo Zhibo's repeated requests. Then he saw a name and an idea flashed in his mind. "Captain Zhuo, there's even a first level qi refining warrior this time?"

"There's someone who doesn't know life from death every year." Zhuo Zhibo had likewise noticed this strange type long ago, but he hadn't taken it to heart. Not to mention anything else, the difference in strength was really too great. Wang Pushi had reprimanded him because of Feng Zhang and told him someone was coming to report for duty, but he'd simply not mentioned Li Qingshan's name at all. Or perhaps even Wang Pushi thought that Li Qingshan didn't have the ability to make off with his small life

when faced with Feng Zhang. Moreover this was several months ago.

Zhou Wenbin concealed his smile. He didn't have Zhuo Zhibo's influence in Blessed Peace, but he came from Clear River City and he'd studied at the classic halls of the Hundred Schools of Thoughts. His connections and information network were much more efficient, and his memory was also very good. He faintly remembered a certain friend in Clear River City once mentioning an entertaining anecdote in a letter. There was a name mentioned on it, it seemed the surname was Li.

White Eagle Captain Gu Yanying was the woman with the greatest power and the greatest authority in the Ruyi region, the dream lover of every man. There was no one who wasn't be tempted as long as they saw her. They could only drool about her however, unable to get any closer, but every information about her was a topic people discussed with enthusiasm, just like for the superstars in Li Qingshan's former world.

Moreover, Clear River City's old Wang had even lashed out at this old friend Zhuo Zhibo because of this matter, hence it had been even worth for him remembering the aftertastes of this interesting affair.

"Then I'll bet ten spirit stones on this little lad. To dare come apply with a strength at the first level of qi refining, he certainly has something he can rely on to rise from obscurity and become an Eagle Wolf guard."

Zhuo Zhibo's eyes shrank. He said smiling, "And you were still saying you don't like gambling. Isn't this betting instinct of yours even greater than mine?"

A group of people stood above, betting on the life and death of people below. A group of people stood below, becoming the gambling stakes of people above. Qi refining didn't change mankind's urge for gambles. Fighting with each others and vying



for supremacy, these primitive instincts merely manifested themselves in a somewhat different manner when embodied by mankind.

Li Qingshan stood beside the field, a group of qi refining warriors brimming with hostility against him. No one thanked him for selling them talismans and increasing their odds of victory; they merely hated him for seizing the opportunity for extorting them. Those who couldn't buy any also harbored a grudge against him because their opponents had increased in strength. There was even less of a need to mention those who'd mocked him and then been mocked by him in turn.

# Chapter 115

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The qi refining warrior who'd antagonized Li Qingshan face to face snickered coldly. He walked past by him and said in a quiet voice, "I'm going to see how you die. You better use the time left to pray to the gods not to meet me."

Li Qingshan said with a faint smile, "I'm confident I won't meet you." Then he crossed the plaza under the attention of every qi refining warrior and came at the foot of the pavilion. Two green-clothed attendants barred his way. "What are you doing?"

Li Qingshan ignored the attendants. He lifted his head and said in a loud voice, "I dare ask, is Captain Zhuo Zhibo here?"

"What are you trying to do?" "Are you tired of living?" The group of qi refining warriors was greatly astounded, and the Dark Wolf guards above also exposed looks of consternation.

Brandy Nose mumbled, "Looks like I guessed wrong, this kid is going to die before he even goes up on stage."

"Drive him away!" Zhuo Zhibo frowned. Was his name something any little qi refining warrior could directly call?

Swish!

Two Eagle Wolf guards outside the veranda casually pulled out their blades. The other Eagle Wolf guards maintained their former attitude, drawing the picture of men looking at an interesting show.

"I bet he can stop at least three moves!" Brandy Nose's words immediately made his blade-wielding colleagues become a little more serious. One of them said, "Then I'll take on that bet!"

Zhou Wenbin suddenly said, "Wait! Captain Zhuo, that's the man I bet on, if he dies like this I won't admit any debt. Maybe he has some issues, we might as well take a look at it!" The smile in his eyes became even deeper. He stood up and came down to the

veranda. Zhuo Zhibo could only follow him, feeling a little disquieted.

Zhuo Zhibo stood high and looked down at Li Qingshan. “What do you want?”

“Captain Wang Pushi made me come.” A dark light flashed in Li Qingshan’s hand and shot upward toward the building.

Zhuo Zhibo stretched out his hand and caught it. He saw it was a Dark Wolf badge. The matter from several months ago suddenly surfaced in his mind. He abruptly lifted his head and looked at Li Qingshan. “So you’re that person?” He didn’t expect this kid who’d caused Feng Zhang to lose his position and cause Wang Pushi to berate himself to be still alive. He even unexpectedly dared to show his face in front of him.

Li Qingshan spread his hands open and shrugged his shoulders. “Replacement guaranteed if not authentic.”

Zhou Wenbin faintly smiled at the success of his scheme. “Captain Zhuo? What’s this about?”

Zhuo Zhibo said with a heavy face, “Lord Zhou’s foresight is deep and astute, there is no need to ask a question when you already know the answer.”

He’d always flaunted his wisdom and knowledge, but today Zhou Wenbin actually played a trick on him to his face, hence his mood was bad to the extreme. He looked at Li Qingshan, itching to give him a slap and kill him on the spot.

“Are captain Wang’s words valid?” Li Qingshan entirely disregarded Zhuo Zhibo’s anger. He felt relief after getting his first look at Zhuo Zhibo. According to his visual assessment, Zhuo Zhibo was merely at the level of a monster with a newly formed monster core; this was within the scope of what he could endure.

A qi refining warrior of the sixth level who’d shaped a sea of qi was roughly equivalent to a monster who’d formed a monster core.

Monsters cultivated for a very long time, but they weren't without their advantages. Their bodies of flesh were formidable, while their monster qi was dense and deep. They far exceeded humans at the same realm, holding an almost overwhelming advantage. Humans could barely stay level even using spiritual devices and talismans as weapons. In the end it was only thanks to wisdom and numbers that mankind managed to repress the monsters.

Added with a helper cultivating the [Dao of the Beautiful Bones] like Little An, Li Qingshan was naturally secure in his own strength. He wasn't one to make compromises in order to win favor with somebody, and since he was already clearly aware it was impossible for Zhuo Zhibo to like him, then he might as well let things run their own course. It seemed a little arrogant and despotic when witnessed by others however.

Who dared to say in Clear River prefecture that Wang Pushi's words weren't valid. At least Zhuo Zhibo didn't dare to. His expression changed a few times then returned to normal and even carried a little smile when he tossed the dark wolf badge back down the pavilion. "Li Qingshan, you're an Eagle Wolf guard, you wait below!"

"Many thanks to captain Zhuo for the promotion!" Li Qingshan arched his hands in salute but he became even more vigilant instead. This kind of person who could control their own emotions were like poisonous snakes hiding among the grass. They were more dangerous than angry tigers and lions.

The Eagle Wolf guards observing to the side couldn't help but be surprised when they heard these words, while the qi refining warriors who came to apply went in an even louder uproar. Spots were scarce to begin with, and now one spot was already spoken for. The little clown who was certain to die in their eyes actually directly passed the test in such a way. They immediately became indignant.

The qi refining warrior who'd gone head to head with Li

Qingshan and who had his heart set on burying Li Qingshan to the land of the dead shouted out loud, “That’s not fair, why can he skip the contest!”

“He’s only a first level qi refining warrior, can even this kind of person be casually admitted in the Eagle Wolf Guard?”

Diao Fei and Qian Rongzhi watched Li Qingshan from afar, their shock and astonishment no less than other people beside them. Neither of them said anything. How could a group of small qi refining warriors change the decision of a Dark Eagle captain. They were pondering how powerful a backing he would need to make Zhuo Zhibo directly take him in. Wang Pushi? Who was that?

Wang Pushi’s nickname “old Wang” spread out too far and wide, making his actual name fade away from people’s memories. But both of them were quick of mind and well-informed. They immediately reacted, could it be that Red Eagle captain old Wang from the legends? Couldn’t be, that was a figure overlooking every qi refining warrior in Clear River prefecture, one of the three persons ruling over a land three thousand miles across.

But who else other than this man could pressure Zhuo Zhibo into lowering his head without even being present at the scene. They looked at Li Qingshan again, and felt this apparently ordinary sixteen years old young man seeming to gain an aura of unfathomable depth. If that man were truly the one standing behind him, then he was a figure that could definitely not be provoked.

Diao Fei thought that if he were able strike a relationship with such a figure, then killing Qian Rongming without batting an eye would be a matter of course.

Zhou Wenbin looked at the tumultuous field with a smile. He said to Zhuo Zhibo, “Right then I was merely joking with you. I already said that gambling is the thing I dislike the most in my entire life. Captain Zhuo needs not take it to heart.”

“But there’s no word I say that I won’t keep. Is lord Zhou looking down on my sincerity as a gambler?” A somber smile sat on Zhuo Zhibo’s face as he casually took a walnut from a fruit plate on the table and twisted it between his fingers.

Li Qingshan suddenly felt a fearful murderous aura. There were no more than three persons in the entire field would could clearly see it, Li Qingshan one among them.

That walnut broke through the air and penetrated the curtain of rain with a power to perforate through stone and pierce through clouds. It shattered countless raindrops, piercing a hole in the air then hitting the forehead of a qi refining warrior of the second level.

“Bang!”

The walnut broke to pieces and the forehead disintegrated. An angry expression was still left on that qi refining warrior’s face when a gigantic strength broke his neck and flung his skull to the ground. His entire person fell down in a distorted posture.

All the qi refining warriors closed their mouths, as if their necks were being strangled at the same time. Each and every one of them were children blessed by the gods back in their hometowns, standing over ten thousand others, holding the power of life and death over men of the rivers and lakes, to say nothing of the common folk.

Now, a qi refining warrior as grand as themselves had had his life so simply stripped away, seemingly as easy as butchering chicken and killing dogs. Moreover the one to die could have been anyone among them. That guy merely had had the bad luck of being randomly chosen as a warning for others.

They looked at the perpetrator, the Zhuo Zhibo standing on the tall pavilion. That silhouette a little short and plump seemed to have grown taller in an instant. They suddenly understood something. This place was Blessed Peace, the place with the most

and the strongest qi refining warriors within several hundred miles, while they stood in the domain of the Eagle Wolf guard which had the strongest and most numerous qi refining warriors. Not mentioning talking about nonsense, even the dissatisfaction in their hearts vanished.

Li Qingshan heaved a sigh. This was reality.

There was a great difference between every level at the qi refining stage. If qi refining warriors at the second level wanted to defeat a qi refining warrior at the third level, then perhaps they could still find safety in numbers and achieve victory with a mighty talisman. But they could only hope for protection from the gods if they wanted to escape from a fourth level qi refining warrior. Death was ineluctable if faced with a fifth level qi refining warrior.

On top of that, the difference between the fifth level and the sixth level was even higher than the differences between the previous levels all added together, just like a monster beast without a monster core would have no way to prevail against a monster who'd formed one. Killing a small qi refining warrior of the second level was even easier than eating and drinking for a qi refining warrior of the sixth level who'd established a sea of qi. They wouldn't even have the time to react, to say nothing of escaping.

Zhuo Zhibo wouldn't have dealt with it so ferociously either in ordinary times. After all, every qi refining warrior had very great influences back in their own area, or they came from clans and sects. He had no wish to start random feuds. But now his heart was filled with anger and he stopped paying attention to these. A little qi refining warrior, if they died then so be it, who would dare to come to him for revenge?

Zhuo Zhibo faintly swept his glance over Li Qingshan. Li Qingshan could tell he would rather have thrown that walnut his way instead, but he merely gave him a smile. Zhuo Zhibo's brows

wrinkled even tighter. Ordinary people would tremble in fear and alarm when they witnessed unrivaled power, and it would be even more of a psychological pressure if that person held animosity for you. You could even force someone into madness after some time.

But he couldn't see the slightest fear on Li Qingshan, only extreme calm and tranquility. Either Li Qingshan was an idiot and didn't know fear at all, or else he was secure there was something he could fall back on. The answer was obviously the latter

Zhuo Zhibo would of course not believe that Li Qingshan felt secure because of his own strength, which meant he had supporters behind him. However Wang Pushi hadn't expounded on his relationship with Li Qingshan and had only said a few words in passing. Seeing his manners seeming very indifferent, he couldn't help but look at Zhou Wenbin. This loser had many connections in Clear River City and was definitely aware of something.

Zhou Wenbin cleared his throat: "Captain Zhou, I heard the White Eagle of the Ruyi region also met with this kid and even invited him to drink a cup. She also made constable old Wang give him the Verdant province Mind Map he carried on him."

"Really?" Zhuo Zhibo's heart shivered. A name rose in his mind, as well as that white figure he'd glimpsed in a rush but was certain he would never forget. He could also be said to be well-informed. He knew that captain Gu had once appeared in that small border city, and knew even better that the reason why Feng Zhang had been directly fired was because he'd been caught red-handed and caused old Wang to lose face in front of captain Gu.

But he had absolutely no idea about the details, because none of those present at the scene were people he could interrogate. The reason Zhou Wenbin was able to know was because this friend of his had shared wine in the company of beautiful women together with Hua Chengzan.



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Zhou Zhibo's brows wrinkled tight. His eyes when he looked once more at Li Qingshan became more careful. Li Qingshan's casual attitude seemed to fit this conjecture.

The carcass of the dead qi refining warrior had already been carried away at this time, and the sequence of the contest once again rearranged. A Dark Wolf guard personally came down and took charge.

The qi refining warriors both envied and loathed Li Qingshan, but they didn't dare speak too much nonsense. This guy was an Eagle Wolf guard starting from now on, not an existence that could be casually provoked.

The Dark Wolf guards on the pavilion also each harbored their own thoughts as they looked at Li Qingshan with contemptuous or perhaps inquisitive eyes. Arrogant newcomers weren't well liked no matter the community. Not to mention, it was tantamount to Li Qingshan taking the place of a former colleague of theirs, Feng Zhang, and he only had a strength at the first level of qi refining to begin with, hence it made them even more disdainful. Quite a few of them were considering how to teach a lesson to this kid from the mountains who didn't know the vastness of the sky and the depths of the land.

Li Qingshan stood just like this under the pavilion, watching the field with an attitude even more relaxed than that of the gambling Eagle Wolf guards, as if the many gazes thrown his way were nothing at all. He found out that standing outside the field and watching them kill each others was indeed better than being on the field and seen as a gambling pawn.

Two qi refining warriors walked to the centre of the field, separated by a distance of ten steps.

The one on the left was aged above twenty, dressed in green

casual clothes with a clean white beardless face. He stood empty-handed without any weapon on him. Li Qingshan remembered he'd bought two talismans from him, one bottom-level and one lower-quality, hence he clearly had a little wealth. He probably came from an aristocratic family.

The one on the right was much older, at least thirty to forty years old, dressed in gray close-fitting clothes with a very prominent red scar on his face. He brimmed with a swift and fierce aura from head to toes, a sword hanging at his waist. If he wasn't guessing wrong, this should be a former martial artist who'd transformed his internal strength into true qi.

Both of them were at the second level of qi refining. Li Qingshan couldn't judge on the spot which one was stronger and which one weaker. That green-clothed qi refining warrior certainly had a few talismans with decent power in his hands. He held the advantage when it came to assets, but his experience in real combat ought to be lacking, and even if he had some it would mostly be through bullying the weak from a position of strength.

That gray-clothed qi refining warrior had killed his way out of wilderness of the martial world with genuine swords and spears. His fighting experience was certainly extremely rich. Moreover Yan Song once said that those who came from a martial art background were often stronger among lower level qi refining warriors.

The two of them confronted each other inside the drizzle. A clang rang up. The first fight began.

The gray-clothed qi refining warrior moved his body and became a beam of gray light rushing toward that green-clothed qi refining warrior. He pulled out his sword at the same time, the entire movement smooth and natural, flowing into one whole. One moment they were still ten steps apart, the next moment a sword glinting with cold sharp light stabbed its way toward the green-clothed qi refining warrior's throat.

Li Qingshan cried out in praise inside his mind. Indeed worthy of someone coming from a former martial artist.

The green-clothed qi refining warrior stayed calm and collected. He unfolded his arms like a great bird gliding in the sky and stepped backwards. He revolved the true qi in his body and moved his hands. A ball of fire as big as a fist shot out.

A spell!

Li Qingshan immediately focused all of his attention. He'd already learned from Yan Song that true qi wasn't a simple enhancement. Apart from increasing speed and reinforcing strength, it could also allow one to use many mystical spells. Those talismans consisted in essence of spells sealed into symbols that could be triggered at any time.

The heat from the ball of fire vaporized the rain until even the ground became dry, sizzling a cloud of white steam. The might of the fireball was obvious for all to see. It would probably instantly ignite a body of flesh and bones into a torch at the first touch.

The gray-clothed qi refining warrior seemed to fear it very much, but he didn't panic in the least. He used a profound footwork, his body shaking east and swaying west, and actually bypassed the ball of fire by a hundredth of a hair. His hair and eyebrows were singed into a mess, but his speed didn't slow down much.

The green-clothed man exposed nervousness on his face. He'd obviously underestimated the vigor of a former martial artist struggling with his life on the line. His chess opening to force the gray-clothed man back and open the distance between them came to nothing. The true qi inside his body hadn't recovered yet and he didn't have time to use the next spell. He clenched his teeth and took out a talisman then slapped it on his body. A breeze rose from under his feet, immediately increasing his speed by a great margin.

Li Qingshan understood then that the might of a spell was high, but the speed of use wasn't. It would have been alright if he'd met

with a qi refining warrior the same as him, since their reaction speeds would both be limited, but it was more than he could handle now that he met a former martial artist.

The green-clothed qi refining warrior pulled away, ball after ball of fire coming from his hands. Great patches of white mist soared from the field. Suddenly a fire ball flew in Li Qingshan's direction. A wind blade slashed through the air just as he was about to dodge and cut the ball of fire. Waves of heat assaulted forth and flapped Li Qingshan's clothes in jitters.

Li Qingshan looked up. A Dark Wolf guard sheathed his blade back in its scabbard, coldly snorting in contempt when he saw Li Qingshan look his way.

The gray-clothed qi refining warrior looked miserably battered from head to toes in the wide stretch of steam, traces of roasting singes all over his body, but none of them were lethal. He locked onto the green-clothed qi refining warrior with both viciousness and cautiousness, not letting him go away.

Instead the green-clothed man became frenetic from the exhaustion of his true qi. The duration of bottom-level talismans was extremely limited and the breeze under his feet was gradually dissipating. He hurriedly took out a low-quality talisman.

Li Qingshan faintly shook his head. The outcome was already set. The right way would have been to use a power to overwhelm the opponent right at the start. This kind of wishy-washy wouldn't do. He could also understand him however; one talisman used was one less talisman, and the chances for future victory would be lower the more they were used at the beginning. It was very possible to come out empty-handed in the end, having only wasted talismans of considerable value instead.

A stern light flashed inside the gray-clothed man's eyes. He'd also imperceptibly taken out a talisman in his left hand.

The talisman tore to shred and suddenly transformed into a

patch of white light so dazzling one couldn't keep the eyes open. The qi refining warriors on the sides turned their heads away one and all.

Li Qingshan actually clearly saw from outside the field that this talisman was a mere bottom-level one. It couldn't cause any injury apart from blinding the eyes.

That green-clothed man's spirit became flustered however, and a slight stiffness appeared on his body because of the fear.

In a fight between masters, one vied for but the slightest advantage.

Light flashed then died down just as fast, flashing together with the glint of a sword. Senseless gurgling sounds came from mouth of the green-clothed qi refining warrior. An iron sword flashing with spiritual light was impaled in his throat. His eyes were filled with unwillingness. He still had many talismans he didn't use, and the one to win would definitely have been him if he'd used these talismans right at the start. Two trails of tears spilled from the corner of his eyes, drowned by remorse and death.

The Dark Wolf guard proclaimed in a loud voice, "Single Feat Liu wins!" He didn't even mention the name of green-clothed man. You might amaze the world with a single feat, or you might die in nameless obscurity.

Rich fighting experience and decision-making became the keys to victory.

Li Qingshan understood even better that whether talismans or spells, they were used by men. A sheep was a sheep even if it had the fangs of a wolf.

It was unfortunate however that Single Feat Liu ultimately failed to amaze the world with a single feat. He encountered a third level master in the second round already, but fortunately he took an early opportunity to admit defeat and avoided throwing his life

away in vain.

Thin strands of rain fell from a hazy sky. The contest progressed match by match. Not every match saw someone dead; you could admit defeat if you weren't a match and the opposite side couldn't pressure you too aggressively. At long last that could be seen as a little attempt by the Eagle Wolf Guard to reduce casualties.

What qi refining warriors employed were too formidable however, whether talismans or spells. Almost everyone had a strong offense and a weak defense, and oftentimes the possibility for admitting defeat simply didn't exist. Being hit by a single move was a straight road to death. One walked but a thin line between victory and defeat, between life and death.

Four corpses already lay at the sidelines by the end of the second round. Noble qi refining warriors lay on mud without the slightest living breath just like this. Li Qingshan suddenly felt it was very stupid. They had everything before already, everything ordinary people couldn't obtain in an entire lifetime, but they came to a risk for the sake of obtaining even more and thereby threw away their lives.

Then he suddenly remembered, wasn't he also the same? He couldn't very well say he followed his grand dreams and the others merely their stupid ambitions. He couldn't help but shake his head in self-derision.

He still had no plan to change his mind however. The so-called to be satisfied with what one already had was merely self-consolation for the weak, the creed of life for those who lost their vital drive and the energy to forge ahead. Men should have the ambition to conquer the world. What use was there to talk about contentment when one's aspirations weren't achieved yet. Only the struggle to forge ahead was the root of happiness. It wouldn't be a waste of one's life even if it were to end in failure and death.

He cleanly swept the pretentious thoughts away from his mind.

He looked at the field, his eyes no longer containing any derision or self-ridicule, but admiration instead, admiration at the qi refining warriors mobilizing their entire wisdom and power.

Fighting for supremacy against their opponents, beseeching victory from the jaws of defeat, seeking survival under the shades of death, the vibrant vitality revealed therein made even death seem insignificant. Fighting spirit and desire for battle flowed inside him.

Zhuo Zhibo was keeping an eye on Li Qingshan from the beginning and acutely sensed the intense fighting spirit on Li Qingshan. He noticed him watching the competition in the field with an expression close to praise and admiration. This was very unusual. The Dark Eagle guards on the pavilion didn't dare to jeer in loud hubbubs as they usually did because of his own wrath, but they still maintained an arrogant attitude of looking down from high above as if they were appreciating a fight between beasts, even if they also had come from within the field of fighting beasts. Only Li Qingshan admired the battles and longed for killing.

Zhou Wenbin was also observing Li Qingshan. This young man, no, this man had a very different temperament from ordinary people. He restrained it in ordinary times and seemed ordinary, but it would break out of him at the slightest opportunity and reveal itself.

No matter how special however, everything was in vain without enough strength and a sufficient realm. A teenager at the first level of qi refining could be said to have some innate talent inside Blessed Peace, but he would be merely average if he were to be put in the entire Clear River province. He would only have the strength of a Dark Wolf guard for his entire life probably; his fate could be considered great already if he were able to form a sea of qi.

He threw a sidelong glance at Zhuo Zhibo and faintly shook his head. Under this man's banner, even such a desire would probably

be very difficult to realize.

Li Qingshan had had very few genuine fights with qi refining warriors. He felt he benefited greatly from watching these matches. Odd and novel spells and moves appeared in his eyes one after another. He not only watched but also silently thought up countermeasures in his mind, so he could be guarded against them if he were to encounter them in the future.



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Diao Fei and the other third level qi refining warrior were undoubtedly the strongest ones in this contest, but the most eye-catching was actually Qian Rongzhi. There were many female qi refining warriors, several of them among the ones who came to apply this time, but few could have her innate beauty. Beautiful women were eye-catching no matter where they went. There were three spots however, and Li Qingshan occupied one already. The last two firmly belonged to the two third level qi refining warriors, while the others had practically no chance left as long as they didn't meet each other.

The contest progressed very quickly. Many times victory and defeat were divided in an instant as fleeting as a spark. The fourth round came in less than four hours. Only four persons were left in the field. It seemed the two third level qi refining warriors were about to defeat the two second level ones and seize victory, but the situation then suddenly changed. A green-clothed messenger read from the list; the two second level qi refining warriors faced each other, the third levels faced each other.

The expressions faintly changed on the faces of both Diao Fei and the other third level qi refining warrior, while hope suddenly burst out from the two second level ones, Qian Rongzhi among them. Her attitude was calm, as if she'd expected it long ago.

Li Qingshan drooped his eyes when Qian Rongzhi walked into the field. Victory and defeat were already decided. Qian Rongming had a medium-quality talisman as a trump card, and Qian Rongzhi was faintly above him no matter in cultivation or in status, hence how would she be lacking one of her own.

Qian Rongzhi grasped a talisman in her hand as soon as she went on stage just as he expected. But what exceeded Li Qingshan's expectations was that she didn't immediately trigger it. Instead she mildly said to the opposite qi refining warrior, "Noble son Zhang,

you should be able to see that the might of my medium-quality talisman is extremely great. I have no desire to cause harm however. Please admit defeat!”

“Noble son Zhang” couldn’t help but hesitate. He indeed had knowledge and experience of Qian Rongzhi’s strength, and added to this medium-quality talisman, his odds of victory didn’t reach even one third.

Qian Rongzhi made full use her advantages as a woman. The drizzle dampened her clothes, drawing the outlines of her beautiful body. Her eyes were misty as rain, not appearing the least threatening as she seemed to be simply beseeching his consent, “I am truly unwilling to become your foe unless as a very last resort. If one day your esteemed self were to visit Ancient Wind City, Rongzhi will entertain you properly without fail.”

Zhou Wenbin laughed on the pavilion and said, “Captain Zhuo, is it fine even this way?”

Zhuo Zhibo said, “Why wouldn’t it be. The contest isn’t only about cultivation to begin with, but even more about wisdom.”

Li Qingshan couldn’t help but respect this woman’s schemes. As he expected, that qi refining warrior called “Noble son Zhang” chose to admit defeat under the soft pleading words of a beautiful woman and the coercion of a talisman.

Qian Rongzhi also walked across the plaza and came under the pavilion, coming to a stand beside Li Qingshan. She even gave Li Qingshan a honeyed smile. “There have been some people who previously underestimated the noble son. If I have given offense, then please do not take it to heart.” She’d started indistinctly to display her body’s beauty worthy of pride, as if Li Qingshan weren’t a murderer related to Qian Rongming’s death but a heroic young man for whom her heart raced.

It was actually the first time Li Qingshan heard someone call him noble son, but it only gave birth to a secret chill. He gave an

imperceptible grunt and no longer paid attention to her. She was as belle poisonous as snake or scorpion, whether she genuinely didn't put Qian Rongming's death to heart or was pressing her hatred down to the bottom of her heart. Such a heart probably came from the education of a great clan. It was impossible for him to be tempted by such a woman, no matter how beautiful.

Qian Rongzhi not only paid no mind to Li Qingshan's indifference, she even continuously searched for topics of conversation. "Who do you think will win out of those two?"

Li Qingshan frowned and focused his vision entirely on the field. The exchange of blows between the two third level qi refining warriors would be the climax of this contest, but it wasn't to be the intense crossing of swords and the anxious confrontation he'd imagined.

After a few probes, Diao Fei triggered that Thunder Strike Talisman he bought from Li Qingshan. A flash of thunder thick as a water bucket fell from the sky in a burning white radiance and easily broke through the protective true qi, frying his opponent to a chunk of coal.

The vestiges of that lightning strike disappeared from under the eyelids only a long time later. Its formidable might made even Li Qingshan astonished. He would have suffered injuries even turned back into a monster from this divine punishment in the form of thunder.

Qian Rongzhi's eyes twinkled. "This noble son Diao picked a good time."

The right timing and opportunity were things critical to every spell or technique. Dark thunders had been continuously rolling inside the layers of clouds today. This Thunder Strike Talisman had displayed a power close to an upper-quality talisman in this summer storm weather. It was simply nothing a low-level qi refining warrior could withstand and became an absolute trump

card.

Diao Fei also walked beside Li Qingshan. He did his utmost to maintain his calm but it was difficult to hide the ecstasy on his face. He even said thanks to Li Qingshan in a low voice, seemingly not splitting hairs about that one Pearl Dew Pill any longer.

Two medium-quality talismans became the keys the keys to victory. The three of them became the final winners, reconnecting their previous karma from the boat; the three of them could definitely not be called friends however.

Zhuo Zhibo said on the pavilion, “Come up!”

“I refuse!” Someone suddenly howled, his face distorted by jealousy. The psychological blow from the defeat made him somewhat insane, brimming with hatred as he watched Li Qingshan. “With you trash’s strength at the first level, what allows you to stand above me...”

Zhuo Zhibo didn’t act but merely said to Li Qingshan, “You’re already an Eagle Wolf guard, someone provoking you is the same as provoking the Eagle Wolf Guard, you know what you should do!” It was as if he didn’t realize the difference between qi refining at the first level and the second level. The other Eagle Wolf guards also had expressions of partaking in the fun and waited for Li Qingshan to be defeated. See if you still have any face to stand here.

Li Qingshan turned around free and easy. He walked toward that qi refining warrior whose name he’d learned was Lu Hui from the contest right now. It was precisely the one who’d provoked him from the very beginning and whom he’d insulted as garbage in return. He said, “Since you wish so strongly for death, then I’ll help you accomplish your desire.”

Such words sounded like delirious ravings when they fell into the others’ ears.

“What do you want to do? You’re only at the first level of qi refining!” Lu Hui unexpectedly felt a deep sense of fear for some unknown reason as he watched Li Qingshan slow approaching steps. He was much more clear-headed now and regretted his earlier words.

Li Qingshan stopped his feet when they were still separated by a distance of twenty steps. He leaned his body forward and bent his knees like a tiger lying low in the forest as it readied itself to pounce on its prey. He leaped up, his strength breaking out after being compacted for a brief moment.

Li Qingshan’s eyes were easy and unperturbed like a young king of beasts lithely leaping out from the woods without ruthlessness or wrath, merely a tranquil serenity born from self-confidence that sent palpitations to the hearts of men.

Lu Hui watched that pair of emotionless eyes and felt an almost suffocating pressure. He’d hastened the entire true qi inside his body when Li Qingshan had halted his steps, but he merely saw an afterimage glide beside him when Li Qingshan turned the extreme tranquility into extreme action. The speed of that shadow was too high, to the extent it gave birth to the illusion that the raging winds only rushed to him a long time later, hitting his face together with an ice-cold drizzle.

The human silhouette in front of him disappeared from his eyes. He felt a sharp pain in his chest. He lowered his head; there was a hollow emptiness in his chest. He struggled to turn his head back and saw Li Qingshan grasp a heart dripping with fresh blood in his hand. He opened his mouth, but he fell down facing the sky before he had time to say anything.

A moment of silence emerged in the entire plaza, the sound of the rain becoming suddenly clear and sharp. Everyone exposed shock, and even Zhou Wenbin or Zhuo Zhibo revealed some emotion. They said in unison, “Body refining warrior!”

A second level qi refining warrior killed in one hit, moreover not from an ambush, not by a talisman, but killed frontally; everyone felt a gust of deep chill. The qi refining warriors looked at Li Qingshan as if they were looking at a monstrosity. Was he really at the first level of qi refining?

They no longer complained about Li Qingshan not going on stage, but felt rather incomparably fortunate. There would probably have been a few more corpses laying at the edge of the field if he'd gone on stage, and maybe they would have been among those. No one was a fool indeed. To dare to peddle talismans before the battle was to have absolute confidence in one's own strength. Pity themselves for actually mocking him, but it was fortunate they hadn't truly stood out and made an enemy of him like that fool.

Even the Eagle Wolf guards who'd always maintained a flippant attitude toward the contest below all watched Li Qingshan with consternation. They were originally exceedingly contemptuous of this kid who'd relied on his connections and joined through the backdoor in broad daylight as soon as he came, but they entirely changed their views at this moment. This kid was definitely not one that could be casually taught a lesson.

The shock Li Qingshan brought to the crowd as soon as he acted was even above that of Zhuo Zhibo killing the qi refining warrior earlier. One had attacked the weak from a position of strength. Instantly killing the other side was merely to be expected. The other defeated the strong from the weaker side, but he likewise destroyed his enemy, this was too abnormal.

Li Qingshan tossed the heart down and steadied his breath. He'd instantly burst out his physical strength and true qi in the space of a flash, and the resulting effects were a little surprising even to himself, although he had had absolute confidence and certainty when he'd attacked.

Tiger Demon Stream Leap, Tiger Demon Heart Scoop, these

moves seemed to have merged into his blood after he turned into a monster, becoming part of his instinct.

He'd taken advantage of an opening and defeated Feng Zhang with merely the strength of his body back when he didn't have a bit or shred of true qi. During these few days, he'd cultivated every day and made his body become even more formidable thanks to the monster qi transformed from the several dozen qi condensing pills he'd eaten. His true qi was also nearing the peak of the first level and was pure to the extreme on top of it. His power had gone through a change overturning the sky and the land.

It had been the opposite for Lu Hui. He'd just gone through three matches right then and his physical strength or true qi had both been at their weakest. Between one strong and one weak, the outcome had been very obvious.

Li Qingshan had a new assessment about his own power. In a human state, it shouldn't be a problem to frontally kill a third level qi refining warrior. He hadn't seen a fourth level qi refining warrior yet, hence it was difficult to tell. Of course, all of this was based on the premise the opposite side didn't have too powerful a trump card. Even in a contest of trump cards however, how many people could compare to him?

Li Qingshan went back beside Qian Rongzhi and Diao Fei. They both retreated slightly back despite themselves. The frightful destructive power he'd exposed caused an extremely great pressure for them.

Qian Rongzhi couldn't fake out a smile anymore. No one could force out a smile if they knew the one beside them had the ability to kill them at any time, and that person also just happened to be dissatisfied with themselves.

# Chapter 118

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Even the third level qi refining Diao Fei had palms oozing with cold sweat. You would simply not have the time to trigger any talisman at all when faced with such an enemy within a distance of three steps. He was incomparably glad he didn't fall out with Li Qingshan. The three of them climbed the stairs of the pavilion under the guidance of a green-clothed attendant, Diao Fei and Qian Rongzhi conscientiously following behind Li Qingshan. Then they went through a long aisle where over a dozen Dark Wolf guards stepped aside of their way. Li Qingshan could clearly see men and women among them. There were twenty-something young men, but there was no lack of middle-aged people either, or even elderly ones.

They were observing Li Qingshan. Their various expression muddled into one indistinct whole inside Li Qingshan's mind amidst the dusky weather and a gloomy rain. He couldn't remember them; he could merely estimate their powers in silence. The majority of them were at the third level of qi refining. Second level and fourth level ones were in the minority, while he didn't see any fifth level qi refining warrior. In conclusion, there was no one therein especially worth his attention.

Power was a qi refining warrior's best calling card. Without noticing it, Li Qingshan also learned to use strength to assess a person. Zhuo Zhibo and Zhou Wenbin radiated a formidable aura when they finally came in front of them, making him unable to neglect their presence.

Zhuo Zhibo's gaze swept across the three of them, stopping slightly on Li Qingshan's face. Then he said with a kind smile, "Congratulations to all of you, you're a member of the Eagle Wolf Guard starting from today, you did very well... The welcoming banquet will be held a little later. Little Ge, take them to get their things."



A short but plucky qi refining warrior answered, “Yes captain!” He had a somewhat baby face, but he kept a mustache strip over his lip. It seemed a little funny but also very charming.

Zhou Wenbin said, “Captain Zhuo, I won’t bother you any further then, I’m leaving first.” He didn’t even mention the matter of the spirit stones, because he knew that Zhuo Zhibo would naturally send him the spirit stones when he went back. It would be much too aggressive and too much of a slap in the face if he were to ask about it in front of the crowd of Dark Wolf guards.

Zhuo Zhibo insincerely detained him for a while then politely accompanied Zhou Wenbin downstairs. Zhou Wenbin didn’t forget to tell the three of Li Qingshan’s before leaving, “Right, don’t forget to come report to the county offices.”

The county magistrate was still nominally the highest authority in Blessed Peace with the right to dispatch the Eagle Wolf Guard and provide assistance, hence every newly joined Eagle Wolf guard had to report in the county magistrate’s offices. The Eagle Wolf Guard had a supervising privilege but still couldn’t directly ignore orders from the county magistrate, hence they formed a mutually restraining relationship. In practice, who was strong and who was weak still depended on each party’s finesse and power.

His words were directed to the three of them, but everyone could tell he was especially exhorting Li Qingshan. Magistrate Zhou was very interested in him.

Li Qingshan was finally able to penetrate inside the interior of the Eagle Wolf Guard under the guidance of “little Ge.” Lavish exquisite pavilions and kiosks appeared one after another, as if they were in a noble mansion or an imperial palace rather than a governmental office. The green-clothed attendants on the way didn’t show any haughtiness any longer, acting reverend and deferential instead.

Little Ge was quick with jokes. He introduced them to the names

and functions of the the various buildings on the way, to various anecdotes and tales. He chatted away thoughtlessly, and he kept inquiring with much curiosity about how Li Qingshan trained.

“Mere coincidence,” said Li Qingshan with a smile. He already learned that “little Ge’s” name was Ge Jian. His actual age was already above thirty. That he could be so amiable had certainly something to do with the power Li Qingshan had manifested earlier. His guards were still left up, but it was a comfortable thing to be treated as an equal in any case.

Ge Jian said, “It’s rare nowadays to see someone cultivate this. There are some body cultivation techniques inside the library but they’re all about to get moldy. I didn’t expect the might would be so great though, even I am tempted to try cultivating them. When the time comes you have to properly teach me.”

He was merely chatting away. The title of body cultivator seemed equal to that of a qi refining warrior, but that was merely body cultivators pasting gold on their faces. It wasn’t any sort of formidable hidden career path. Just like the daoist technique Strength of Nine Bulls and Two Tigers, the reason the ancient techniques were lost was in the greater part because they’d fallen behind the times.

Compared to the formidable might exhibited during battles, the drawbacks of body refining techniques were much more numerous. Every road was the sum of countless experiences from the men who came before. Li Qingshan wasn’t a man however, and he didn’t need to abide by the roads traced by these “men” who came before him.

They entered a stone building carved against the mountain as they reached the depths of the mountain peak. Ge Jian led the three of them through layers upon layers of stone gates, runes that couldn’t be broken even by spiritual devices etched above every stone gate. Here was the Eagle Wolf Guard’s treasury.

No gold or wealth would be worth such defenses when it came to the Eagle Wolf Guard, apart from these things that possessed spirituality.

Ge Jian first selected two sets of dark wolf uniforms from the treasury for each of them. Li Qingshan lightly stroked the smooth clothes. He'd learned from Ge Jian's presentation they were manufactured from [dark silk](#). They could guard against fire and keep water away, impenetrable by strong crossbows. These were the best clothes he'd ever worn adding his two lives together. He didn't care too much about them however; he didn't fear any crossbow to begin with thanks to his Bull Demon Skin Refining.

Dark silk is a reference to the Dark Silk Clothes made from the silk of dark silkworms from the classic Wuxia novel A Deadly Secret by Jin Yong.

It couldn't help but make one disappointed if this were the sole advantage of joining the Eagle Wolf Guard. There was no trace at all of any disappointment on Diao Fei and Qian Rongzhi's faces however. They hugged the dark wolf uniforms like treasures, their imagination roaming free inside their minds.

Qian Rongzhi's mind was filled with rancor and ecstasy. If she wore this set of clothes and went back to Ancient Wind City, those old guys would probably know to show a little respect. All those who offended her and looked down upon her would pay for it.

The hatred she held for her close relatives was ten times, even a hundred times deeper than for someone who killed a relative of hers like Li Qingshan.

What Ge Jian took out shortly after attracted the entire attention of the three of them. Even Li Qingshan looked expectant. These were three exquisite Hundred Treasures Bags, definitely different from the tattered one he had in his possession.

Ge Jian gave the Hundred Treasures Bags to the three of them. "There are some things inside, those are all welcoming gifts when

you join.”

Li Qingshan poured his spiritual energy inside. He felt the space inside the Hundred Treasure Bag was as big as a chest, ten times larger than the old broken Hundred Treasures Bag he got from Qian Rongming. It could accommodate weapons like swords and sabers. He could finally stuff that [Cursive Sword Script] of his inside.

There was also a bottle of medicine pills inside the Hundred Treasures bag. The tiny bottle was filled with at least thirty qi condensing pills, each of them only as big as a soybean, but each of them were perfectly round and translucent, filled with extraordinary spiritual qi, the medicinal power within superior to that of ordinary qi condensing pills. There were also three lower-quality talismans.

Li Qingshan sigh with emotion. The Eagle Wolf Guard was indeed rich and overbearing, worthy of a national agency with first-class privileges. The material benefits were truly good enough. It wasn't for nothing that so many qi refining warriors tried to join in even at the risk of their lives.

He looked at Diao Fei and Qian Rongzhi beside him. Their faces also exposed delight as they held their own Hundred Treasures Bags.

It didn't stop there however. Ge Jian took the three of them inside the arsenal after opening three stone gates in succession. A blinding light leaked through by the time he opened the last stone gate, blurring the scene in front of Li Qingshan's eyes.

He saw every kinds of arms and weapons deposited in such a great weapon warehouse. Sabers spears swords or halberds, axes hatchets hooks or forks, everything that should be there was there, twinkling with spiritual light bright as a star. Every weapon was a spiritual device.

“There are so many spiritual devices here?” The spiritual devices

Qian Rongzhi was seeing now were more numerous than even every spiritual devices she'd seen in her life added together. She grew up in Ancient Wind City feeling the Qian clan was a great first class clan under the skies, a colossus that couldn't be toppled over, but she only realized after coming to the Eagle Wolf Guard she was viewing the sky from the bottom of a well.

Ge Jian explained, "We've done in quite a few enemies during these years, quite a few qi refining warriors among them. We gave away the spiritual devices we snatched from them if we had no use for them and got contribution in exchange. They all ended up tossed in here."

Li Qingshan said, "What's contribution?"

Ge Jian offered a patient explanation. It turned the Eagle Wolf Guard's duties weren't so busy. As long as you solved a few cases every month, you could act freely the rest of time. You could refine qi in the mountains or play outside, everything was as you saw fit. It was very carefree and relaxed.

Moreover, strength determined everything inside the Eagle Wolf Guard. You couldn't obtain a promotion no matter how hard you worked if your strength wasn't enough. Hence a contribution system was put in place to foster everyone's enthusiasm for work. You obtained corresponding contribution for every case you handled and could exchange it for spiritual pills, talismans, or spiritual devices.

The Eagle Wolf Guard didn't pay any salary in silver, not a single tael of silver, but it distributed ten qi condensing pills every month to provide for cultivation.

High wages, great welfare, much freedom, and work even brought you bonuses. You also received people's veneration wherever you went. Apart from the boss who seemed a little pissed off at him, it was an almost perfect job. But he can stay pissed off. You deserve to be pissed off, sending someone to snatch my thing.

If this gave birth to malicious intentions, then he better watch out when walking the streets at night, lest he met with a monster's evil schemes.

Li Qingshan laughed despite himself, making Diao Fei and Qian Rongzhi both shiver all over.

Ge Jian said, "Everyone can take one and carry it along, whichever you fancy. If you have no confidence in your own judgment, I recommend the standard wind stitching blade. You guys hurry up a bit, we still have to go to your rooms after that."

The three of them immediately started to make their choices in a hurry. Li Qingshan originally intended to choose a heavy weapon, the heavier the better. He originally already had his eyes set on a great axe with a long handle. But then his thoughts revolved in his mind; he came straight in front of the weapon racks on the western side and picked a wind stitching blade. He pulled the blade out of the sheath. Thick cold light enveloped it, while cloud patterns packed densely together. One could tell at first glance it'd never been used, flashing with a brand new glare. The hilt was engraved with runic patterns. You could release wind sabers and wind blades as long as you injected true qi inside. It was worthy of being called an excellently made lower-quality spiritual device.

Ge Jian gave him a thumb up, praising his choice. Li Qingshan also smiled, extremely satisfied with his decision. It wasn't actually that he had no confidence in his judgment. There was a certain savoir faire about knowing which kind of weapon to use in which kind of situation. Now wasn't the same as back when he had to go level the Black Wind Camp.

A weapon too long couldn't fit inside the Hundred Treasures Bag. It wouldn't be very suitable and convenient to carry it with him wherever he went. [He'd began his career back then with a blade](#), now it just happened he could go back to the ways of the blade. Moreover right now he lacked means of attacking from a distance. He couldn't casually expose the Cursive Sword Script. The wind

stitching blade also came with the Wind Saber art, and it fitted very well with his own plans.

The blade or dao shares the same Chinese character as the knife, which was the very first weapon Li Qingshan started using back in chapter 2.

Diao Fei and Qian Rngzhi both picked their own weapons. Diao Fei also held a wind stitching blade, but Qian Rongzhi actually set her eyes on a [water splitting thorn](#).

# Chapter 119

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Many little two-story buildings sat hidden among the lush, rustling vegetation on the mountain, exuding a tranquil elegance. These were the residences assigned to the various Eagle Wolf guards, and now several of them had been tidied, waiting only for the three of them to choose one as they wished. It gave Li Qingshan an even clearer picture of the benefits about joining the Eagle Wolf Guard.

Ge Jian said, “Please bathe and change your clothes after making your choice. I’ll come fetch you again at noon.”

Li Qingshan chose the quietest and most remote little house. He went in after taking his leave of Ge Jian.

Plants and flowers right in dazzling bloom grew in the front. Li Qingshan had no understanding of such matters and had no idea about their names. They glittered in every color under the sun, in a very pretty scene; bees and butterflies fluttered and lingered above, harvesting pollen during reprieves from the rain.

Li Qingshan stood there and enjoyed the scenery for a spell. He opened the door to his house, an appealing room of ancient flavor partitioned into two sections by a hanging bamboo curtain. The front was a guest-receiving hall, and the rear was a tranquil tearoom.

Li Qingshan shook the porcelain jar at his hips and said, “You can come out now, Little An. You must be bored stiff!” He opened the jar and a skeleton flew out. Various bones assembled into a whole body standing in front of Li Qingshan. He shook his head at Li Qingshan, signifying that it was of no importance.

Those who cultivated the [Dao of the Beautiful Bones] were neither dead nor alive, dead yet still alive. They lay in a fascinating state, coinciding by happenstance with the most abstruse and the deepest truths of Buddhism. If one had to talk about concealing



one's aura, then even Li Qingshan couldn't compare despite cultivating the [Spirit Turtle Sea Guarding Secrets], because the dead had no aura.

Little An ran in front of the wall and admired the several antique paintings, then nodded to Li Qingshan, indicating they were all genuine.

Li Qingshan rested his hand on the stairs' railings and slowly walked up the flights of stairs. Little An hastened to follow behind him, pounding the stairs "dong dong dong dongs" on his climb.

An incense burner shaped like a red-crowned crane sat on a square table, its smoke curling up a mahogany screen. The decorations inside the house were all extremely lavish yet subtly arrayed. One could tell at a glance it had been designed by the most brilliant master craftsmen. Anything inside this room, if put on sale, would be something ordinary people couldn't afford for a lifetime.

Li Qingshan pushed the windows open and looked in the distance. His sight crossed over the layers of treetops, taking in the panoramic view of Blessed Peace. Innumerable houses were spread out neat and tidy like matchboxes. A blue water ribbon flashing with light passed through the city; that was Clear River.

If he were to compare it to the scene of living in a bullpen inside Crouching Bull Village, then one was hell and one was paradise. This was the free and easy life befitting qi refining warriors. Li Qingshan closed his eyes and took a deep breath, as if trying to breathe all the freedom and joy deep inside himself.

The bloody killings under that gloomy rain seemed to become an instant, distant memory. Little An tilted his head and watched him, the flames flashing in his eye sockets, also feeling happy for his sake.

Li Qingshan beckoned to Little An. He sat at the table and, just like a miser, poured out everything from the two Hundred

Treasures Bags then once again carefully counted them. He beamed with delight and rubbed Little An's head, saying, "Wait until I officially take up my nine to five, I'll definitely work hard and help you cultivate that supernatural skill, alright? When the time comes, maybe you'll also be able to cultivate qi, who knows? I have to try hard and earn back many qi condensing pills."

Little An nodded nonstop, expressing his agreement while guessing at the meaning of "nine to five."

Hence a big monster and a little skeleton thus planned their lives in all seriousness. They seemed like the most ordinary of common folks on this matter. Strive hard to make money! Make money and marry a wife! Etc etc.

In the end he gathered everything inside the new Hundred Treasures Bag, then gave the old one to Little An. "One for each of us! You don't have much, so I'll use the big one, but don't worry, I'll definitely arrange a better one for you in the future." The one hanging at Zhuo Zhibo's waist seemed pretty good; Li Qingshan couldn't help but think, am I hoping for you to come mess with me? Or am I rather hoping for you not to make any trouble for me?

Little An would naturally not have any objection. He obediently collected the bag, then put the locust wood plaque inside.

Li Qingshan took a comfortable warm bath, then wore the dark wolf uniform and matched it with the wind stitching blade. He told Little An to look after the house then went outside.

A banquet had been arranged inside the big hall.

Zhuo Zhibo's main seat sat in the middle. More than a dozen tables were lined on either side, two people sitting at each, all arranged in order of cultivation.

Ge Jian patted Li Qingshan's shoulder: "Just put up with it!" He was at the first level of qi refining and his cultivation realm the lowest among all the Eagle Wolf guards, hence he could only sit at

the very tail. Everyone knew however that his strength was probably not any worse than a third level if it came to a real fight.

Li Qingshan expressed he didn't care about this and just sat down when a whiff of fragrance came beside him. Qian Rongzhi actually sat beside him and said charmingly, "I should be the weakest, you're truly being wronged."

Li Qingshan thought: is it really like they said, the colder you act with beautiful women the hornier they would latch onto you? However this thought lasted but a moment. He couldn't forget the look of this woman when she accomplished her ambition. If he truly could forget her prior conduct, then that wouldn't be magnanimity but a problem with his head instead. It was too late now to put on an hypocritical act.

But since she greeted him with a smile, he wasn't willing to lose in manners either. He lightly said, "It seems that everywhere in the world, people are separated into seniors and juniors according to strength. There's no difference no matter where you go."

Qian Rongzhi was still all smiles, seemingly not having heard the sarcasm in his words. It looked like her mood was most excellent after joining the Eagle Wolf Guard.

Zhuo Zhibo arrived late. He said a few clichés and expressed his welcome to Li Qingshan and the other two, then with a chuckle, he introduced one by one the Eagle Wolf guards to the three of them. The Eagle Wolf guards inside the Blessed Peace area numbered thirty one in total, Li Qingshan and the other two included. Apart from a few who were cultivating behind closed doors, or off to a mission and not yet back, all of them were in attendance.

Under Zhuo Zhibo's lead, the crowd offered a toast together, congratulating the three for joining the Eagle Wolf Guard. No matter how cold and arrogant they had been before, they all became colleagues at present and would of course not argue or make a ruckus. At least they couldn't expose their contradictions

out in the open, striving to stay warm and affable instead. Of course, Li Qingshan's obscure backstage supporter played a considerable role.

Someone would have come and provoked him by now already, otherwise. It was outstanding of Li Qingshan to kill a second level qi refining warrior in one strike, and it'd brought much shock to everyone. But on second thought, that dead guy had merely been a frightened bird easily startled by a mere twang of a bow, and Li Qingshan was in the end but at first layer of qi refining, the lowest level of qi refining warriors. Most of those present were third or fourth level and didn't fear him.

If an ordinary newcomer were to be so "arrogant," someone would certainly have stepped forth to give him a lesson. But everyone followed Zhuo Zhibo's example at this moment, and none dared to act recklessly. Their attitudes were merely cold and thoughtful.

Hence, Li Qingshan didn't feel Zhuo Zhibo's hostility. On the contrary, this great commander of Blessed Peace personally came to him once mellow with wine.

Diao Fei and Qian Rongzhi stood up in a hurry, but Li Qingshan calmly stayed seated still, making for a striking contrast. He was extremely versed in the ways of the world. He could take the initiative to ease tensions with opponents who suffered defeat at his hand, like Yan Song or Liu Hong.

But he had to straighten his back on the contrary when faced with a strong opponent like Zhuo Zhibo. He didn't think that he could change the other party's impression of himself by merely giving in now. He also was keenly aware of the these qi refining warriors' twisted sense of honor: they considered it mere bad luck to have one's face slapped by the mighty, it only served them right; to be provoked by the weak called for certain killing.

He recalled that he'd merely refused Qian Rongming's

unreasonable request back on the boat, then Qian Rongming tried to kill him in the dead of the night just for that. Would Zhuo Zhibo possess better tolerance? He had absolutely no confidence of this. One with authority like Zhuo Zhibo would probably be even more twisted.

The present superficial peace was merely an illusion maintained thanks to Gu Yanying's reputation, and this illusion would certainly disappear very quickly. He wasn't one of Gu Yanying's own, even if he very much desired, one day in the future, to turn Gu Yanying into his own.

Thanks to the experience from two lives, Li Qingshan could see with great clarity where he stood, the mutual relation between them, hence he selected what he believed to be the most appropriate method, not leaving anything to chance.

In the story about the Donkey of Qian, the only reason the tiger dared not do anything was because of donkey's incomparably unperturbed attitude. He didn't mind taking example from the Donkey of Qian and scare this superior of his. At least it could buy him some peaceful days, and when the day of reckoning came, he truly wanted to have a good look as to which one of them was the tiger, which one the donkey.

The smile on Zhuo Zhibo's face didn't diminish in the least; the desire for murder deepened in his heart. He took the initiative to clink cups with Li Qingshan and exchanged many intimate words with him.

“Qingshan, it must be the first time you leave your family right?”

“Yes.”

“Don't worry, just treat the Eagle Wolf Guard like a family. Don't hesitate to ask if you have any question, everyone here is your brother and sister, I'm the big brother to you all, I ought to take care of you.”

Li Qingshan chuckled coldly inside at Zhuo Zhibo's words. He could hear the words within Zhuo Zhibo's words, inquiring about his relation with Gu Yanying.

Li Qingshan said straight out it was a chance meeting, but that only made Zhuo Zhibo's suspicions stronger. This was precisely Li Qingshan's goal: those with abundant intellect inevitably had abundant mistrust. He was most happy to let Zhuo Zhibo bask in his suspicions. He had the clearest picture of the speed his strength grew. How strong would he be by the time Zhuo Zhibo untangled the truth of the matter?

Diao Fei stood at the side, extremely envious of the treatment reserved for Li Qingshan. Zhuo Zhibo almost hadn't looked him in the eyes at all. How could he be aware of the twists and turns therein.

Zhuo Zhibo made eye-contact with Qian Rongzhi then returned to his seat. Qian Rongzhi became all the more ardent toward Li Qingshan, seemingly intent on easing her relationship with him. She even personally poured wine for Li Qingshan without waiting for the maid. The charm of her face was so thick seemed to almost take solid shape, attracting quite a few glances from Eagle Wolf guards. They revealed their envy, but they glanced at Zhuo Zhibo and all turned their sights away.

Li Qingshan truly showed no reserve either. The wine dried up as soon as it came as he enjoyed her attending with equanimity. With the sharpness of his senses, he'd long sensed a somewhat unclean relation between Qian Rongzhi and Zhuo Zhibo.

He'd cultivated behind closed doors these three days, and it seemed that someone else hadn't been idle either. Unspoken rules were indeed present everywhere; he felt even more unscrupulous when it came to her. He was too lazy to care about someone else's business however. If you have something to sell then good for you if you sell it. The only thing he considered was, would these two potential enemies of his league together to deal with him?

## Chapter 120

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He had absolute confidence in his own strength, but he didn't want to be a fool with fists and no brain. He kept Qian Rongzhi's subtle inquiries at bay with nonsensical chatter. The crowd dispersed once the banquet ended.

The highest reaches of the mountain peak, inside the Dark Wolf captain's private pavilion.

Zhuo Zhibo asked, "Did you fish out some news? What's the real relation between this kid and captain Gu?"

Qian Rongzhi sat on Zhuo Zhibo's thighs, and said fuming, "That kid kept running in circles and refused to tell the truth." Just as Li Qingshan expected, Qian Rongzhi had indeed ingratiated herself with Zhuo Zhibo during the three days on the mountain.

Zhuo Zhibo said, "Let's wait and see then, I'll figure it out. If that person really is really paying attention to him, then there's no longer need for you to think about taking revenge for your enmity."

Qian Rongzhi pressed down her hatred. She stretched out her forefinger and poked at Zhuo Zhibo's face, saying with an enchanting smile, "My enmity is a small thing, anyway my sisters and brothers are so many one dead won't make a difference. The most important thing is great captain Zhuo's face, you only have one of it. You saw that kid's attitude today."

Zhuo Zhibo said, "If that person truly stood behind him, then it's no matter even if I have to let him step on my face. If not, hmph!" He sent a strong slap on Qian Rongzhi's buttocks. "You don't need to incite me. Even if that person truly valued him, I still have ways to deal with him right now. Even if he were a heroic genius, I can still turn him into a good-for-nothing. Let's see when I'm done if there's still someone who takes him seriously."

Qian Rongzhi made a coquettish protest and twisted inside Zhuo Zhibo's embrace, fanning the flames of his lust. He asked once more with curiosity, "Since you don't mind him killing your brother, then why do you cling to vengeance?"

Qian Rongzhi said, "Because he looks down on me. Anyone who looks down on me has to pay the price for it."

Li Qingshan would surely be dumbstruck if he were there. Not only his attitude didn't make the beautiful woman fall in love in him like in folklore tales, it instead caused hatred ingrained deep into the bones. It seemed like tales were merely tales after all.

Zhuo Zhibo looked deeply at Qian Rongzhi and didn't comment. He'd played with quite a few women already at his age, but female qi refining warriors were hard to come by. There were some, but they weren't necessarily good-looking, hence he'd felt desire the first time he saw Qian Rongzhi. Qian Rongzhi also happened to wish for an opportunity to rise in status, hence lust soared like blazing fire on dry wood and gradually turned into a so-called dalliance. His body had already begun to weaken; it was no longer possible his qi refining to make any headway, hence his priority went to all kinds of pleasures.

Qian Rongzhi said, "I heard that body cultivators were all pretty strong." Zhuo Zhibo's bestial instincts erupted with this one sentence. He pounced on Qian Rongzhi. "Today I'll let you taste this old man's power." Qian Rongzhi laughed tenderly again and again; decadence descended inside the room.

Li Qingshan was deeply engrossed in a sea of books right at this moment. Martial arts and secret techniques filled the Eagle Wolf Guard's library. Everything one could think of was there for the reading, everything from punching to kicking to blade to sword techniques. Many of them could start a battle if thrown into the martial world, but here they were like garbage and casually laid out, with only an old man standing guard.



Li Qingshan didn't find the series of techniques for qi refining warriors however. He was about to climb to the second floor when that old man stopped him: "Ten contribution points for one double-hour, no credit allowed."

Li Qingshan could only let it drop. Even martial techniques gave him quite some enlightenment. He stayed and read for two hours, and only went back for fear of making Little An worried.

Then he once again became the somewhat dull cultivation, pill eating, qi refining.

But Ge Jian knocked on Li Qingshan's door as soon as the gathering darkness descended, and said with a secretive air, "I'll take to you to a good place." He even took special care in exhorting him to change his clothes and put his blade away.

He can't be trying to harm me right? Li Qingshan had such a thought but agreed nevertheless. What had to come would come in any case, he only had to raise his vigilance, and if push came to shove he could just go on a killing spree. He made Ge Jian wait a little, went back to the house, brought Little An.

He found Diao Fei already waiting when they came under the memorial arch at the foot of the mountain.

Li Qingshan said, curious, "Where are we going?" They wouldn't go as far as killing Diao Fei as well, right?

Diao Fei said, "Brother Ge said he'll take us stroll around Blessed Peace's night scenery. Right, why not bring Qian Rongzhi as well?"

"This kind of place doesn't suit women." Ge Jian let out a smile every man understood.

Li Qingshan exchanged a glance with Diao Fei. Neither of them said anything. Something like this was difficult to refuse to begin with, to say nothing of a colleague's good intentions. Li Qingshan admitted he was a man who'd "drunk wine with beautiful flowers" and didn't put it too much to heart.

Ge Jian couldn't help but smile faintly when he saw the attitudes from the two. He recalled Zhuo Zhibo's exhortations: don't look at the expenses, take Li Qingshan out and let him have fun, make him enjoy himself to the fullest, the more fun the better. It would be for the best if he put everything aside, what cultivation and training.

Li Qingshan wasn't aware yet that Zhuo Zhibo had already acted against him, using another way. There was simply no need to fight and kill to ruin a man. Sugarcoated weapons were oftentimes more frightful than torture, extravagance and decadence could easily obliterate a man's ambition, drowning him in the most instinctive pleasures.

In Zhuo Zhibo's mind, Li Qingshan was merely a crude wild kid from the mountains, how could he resist such temptations. Even if Li Qingshan were someone Gu Yanying valued, no one could blame Zhuo Zhibo, only Li Qingshan could be blamed for being rotten mud that couldn't climb the wall. This was an insidious method he'd thought of with his deep grasp on human nature, a bite that left no sound nor traces but sank deep to the bones.

Countless houses were lit in Blessed Peace, gloriously alight even at night. It was greatly different from a small city like Suncheer, and it once again reminded Li Qingshan of these great metropolises of his former life. The three of them merged into this patch of light under Ge Jian's enthusiastic calls, entering the most dazzling and prosperous place.

Pavilion of Cloud and Rain.

This didn't sound at all like the name of a pleasure house, yet it was not only a pleasure house, but even the biggest and most luxurious one within several hundred miles.

In all kinds of ways, this was the greatest construction Li Qingshan had seen in this world: a high building shaped like a pagoda, high and low over seven stories tall, resplendent with light

as if ignited with raging flames.

Great human flows streamed in and out the great gates where big red lanterns hung, even livelier than a marketplace.

Piping hot perfume assaulted them before even entering inside. Li Qingshan shrugged and said, "It's just a brothel." It was a bit more luxurious, but in the end it still couldn't compare to the skyscrapers and rainbow neon lights of his former world.

Ge Jian said in a very mysterious tone, "You'll know when you go in. This isn't an ordinary brothel."

One man came out before the three went in, tossed out from the third floor, falling on the ground like a broken burlap bag.

A murder case? Li Qingshan felt a chill in his heart. From a certain point of view, the Eagle Wolf Guard was an equivalent to the police in this world. He hadn't expected to meet with a case as soon as he took up the job. But he looking at the passersby around. They all went busying themselves with their own affairs after a momentary surprise, as if nothing had happened.

He looked back to that spot on the ground. The man actually stood up with a groan and shouted round abuses while rubbing his back. Curses returned back in even louder voices from upstairs: "Whatever gang leader sect leader, scram far away if you have no fiver, we'll waste your martial arts if you still don't get lost, and keep you around as an errand boy to recover the cost."

The man tossed down from upstairs was actually a first-grade master, that was why he could stay unharmed, but then what kind of skill was it that could casually throw out a first-grade master?

The man seemed to be scared by that voice. He muttered a few more insults then blended inside the flow of people, as if nothing happened.

Ge Jian said, "To have fun here, even Eagle Wolf guards have to pay, it's best if you don't stir trouble."

Li Qingshan said, “How can a mere brothel afford such arrogance?”

Diao Fei said, “The Gate of Cloud and Rain is a famous sect in Clear River prefecture, skilled in the ways of dual cultivation. They established Pavilions of Cloud and Rain in every big city, this is only one of them. It’s also the first time I come here though.”

Ge Jian said with a smile, “Dai Fei’s experienced and knowledgeable after all. Qingshan, you must probably know what dual cultivation is!”

“Isn’t it just doing that thing!” Li Qingshan felt his horizons broaden wide. It was one thing if qi refining warriors formed violent organizations or feudal authorities, but there were even whorehouses. He couldn’t help but lower his evaluation once more for the three words “qi refining warrior.”

Ge Jian said, “Dual cultivation is the same as taking spirit pills, both are ancient daos. It pays particular attention to the harmony of yin and yang. But you’re not wrong either, it’s just doing that thing, it’s also bedchamber art. Just think about it, a sect specializing in the study of bedchamber techniques, the girls they raise...”

Li Qingshan grinned, “It couldn’t be [plucking the yang to nourish the yin](#), right?” Could Zhuo Zhibo be trying cause his death with women? That would be too funny.

Pluck the yang to nourish the yin means to take energy from the man (males being associated with yang) to feed the woman (females being associated with yin)

Ge Jian laughed despite himself and said, “How could it be, how would so many people come here if it were so. Anyway, just give it a try and you’ll know.”

Li Qingshan shook his head and said, “Let’s just drop it.” He didn’t feel this here was any sort of good place.

Diao Fei also beat the drums of retreat. Ordinary brothels were one thing, but he'd heard of the many rumors about the Pavilion of Cloud and Rain. A life of dissipation was never befitting the cultivation of a qi refining warrior.

Ge Jian moved tongue and lips in an unceasing torrent of instigation, "Refining qi is so hard and exhausting, should you deprive yourself of a little reward?" "Only the right balance between work and rest is the way forward for cultivation, it's of no matter if it's once or twice here and there." "Don't be so coy and shy if you're men, properly enjoy yourselves, why would real men still fear a few girls?"

He assiduously played the most commonly seen role in the world, that of a petty villain with a honeyed tongue and vile intent. A malicious friend was more fearsome than an outstanding enemy.

Coaxing, encouraging, half-pulling and half-dragging them, he brought the two inside the building. The rumble of a boiling brouhaha filling the ears, many men and women holding and hugging each others with their clothes in disarray; a scene of bliss and merriment. Everyone left their qualms and scruples behind in this bizarre atmosphere, setting free their own desires to their hearts' content, like the Roman orgies from the legends. It made one a little dumbstruck, even one who came from the modern world like Li Qingshan.

"Master Ge, you made the girls wait a long while. The room your honored self reserved is the Heaven room number one, please come upstairs!" A fat woman with thick makeup came to welcome them. She said when she saw Diao Fei and Li Qingshan, "Eh, these two little brothers look very unfamiliar."

Li Qingshan actually saw true qi circulating around this lady boss' body. She was a qi refining warrior.

Ge Jian introduced the two of them. The old brothel keeper said, "So you two turn out to be young and handsome heroes newly

joined in the Eagle Wolf Guard, in the future you have to patronize sister's business." She stretched her hand and rubbed Li Qingshan's chest. "Oh my, so strong and well-built, you must cultivate the body!" Her gaze simply seemed eager to swallow Li Qingshan whole.

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Li Qingshan unceremoniously slapped her hand away, but Ge Jian said, “If you want our patronage, that’ll depend on your assets!”

“Don’t you worry, I only have the best. Miss Cotton Rose has already been waiting for a long while, today she’s not receiving any guest and is waiting just for the three of you, I don’t know how many people are offended.”

A thin man came wailing at this moment, as if to confirm her words. He caught the madam’s arm. “Madam, tonight I absolute have to see Cotton Rose, I’ll give you whatever you want.” But then two strong and sturdy body guards, at least second-grade masters, immediately gagged him and chased him out.

Every man exposed envy and yearning when they heard the three of them were to be accompanied by Cotton Rose. Even the Diao Fei who’d previously stayed cold and indifferent became curious.

The madam chattered in a grating voice while flirting with Ge Jian, her eyes casting amorous glances. Diao Fei sometimes listened to her and sometimes watched the men and women inside the great hall, the view a little overwhelming for him. He’d cultivated painstakingly for many years inside his sect, and such a scene was equally difficult to come by.

Li Qingshan was actually looking upward. The Pavilion of Cloud and Rain was built in an atrium style, with the very summit difficult to spot at a quick glimpse. Paintings of fairy maiden and [flying Asparas](#) adorned the walls. The hallway spiraled round and round from top to bottom; the sound of music and dancing was everywhere. The customers were most numerous at the bottom, hugging the lowest grade flirtatious women. The waft of ardent desire seemed about to shatter through the ceiling of the building.

Li Qingshan dimly saw the jade maiden in the paintings

seemingly move, their roaming, flowing eyes enticing the living. But then on a closer look, they once again became ordinary paintings? Was it mere illusion?

Heaven room number one was at the highest floor of the Pavilion of Cloud and Rain, reserved for noble guests. Three qi refining warriors from the Eagle Wolf Guard could naturally be called noble guests.

The madam took them up the building, story by story, past one room after another. Li Qingshan could clearly hear, even more so thanks to his extraordinary hearing, sounds of passionate lovemaking that sent heat to the heart and blush to the face.

They sat on sumptuous and ethereal cushions made of golden silk. The sound of strings and pipes rose from behind the curtain screen, faintly pulling at heartstrings. Suddenly, a crowd of female dancers fresh as flowers came forward and presented their dance, covered in only a sheer gauze that betrayed glimpses of soft beautiful bodies of swaying breasts and rippling rears.

They tasted the fine wine in their cups, appreciated the song and dance in their eyes. An extremely mild exotic scent mingled inside the numerous cosmetic fragrances, wafting into Li Qingshan's nostrils. His mind seemed to become even more infatuated, wishing only to drown in love and beauty, no matter the rise and fall of the world.

The figure of a woman seemed to emerge then hide amidst the dancers, just like stars cupping around the moon in the nimble yet disheveled dancing; merely emerging and disappearing, the glimpse of elusive grace. Hers was a face covered by a veil, who was she? Could it be that Cotton Rose?

The voices of strings and pipes abruptly rose to the horizon. The dancers suddenly spread out, and that woman materialized into everyone's sight. There was only her ardent, solitary dance now. Li Qingshan and Diao Fei watched with rapt attention, not even



noticing Ge Jian's departure.

In the hall outside, Ge Jian was conversing with that brothel keeper. "This is something our boss Zhuo arranged, don't you neglect anything."

The brothel keeper said smiling, "How would I dare? Our Pavilion of Cloud and Rain still wishes to do business in Blessed Peace. Passion bewildering spice, bewitching dance, enticing music, I used a three-pronged attack. I guarantee it'll make these two kids obsessed until they won't be able to tell father from mother." She threw a glance at Ge Jian's lower body. "Master Ge, didn't you also come out because you couldn't endure anymore? Do you need our Cotton Rose..."

Ge Jian said, "Shut your mouth!" There clearly was a little unnatural flush on his face, and his emotions were somewhat out of control. Those three things were obviously not without their effects on him either. But Zhuo Zhibo had specifically told him that that woman was definitely not one he could touch. Qi refining warriors ruined on her body weren't only limited to one or two, and as to ordinary people from the martial world, they were too many to count. What was even more fearsome was that these people had no regret even to the very end, still willingly handing over all of themselves to her.

At this moment, inside the room, a veil landed on the floor, seemingly a tiny mishap amidst the intense dancing. Cotton Rose stood there in distress. The sound of strings and pipes timely ceased.

The two men stared blankly at the same time. Li Qingshan once again felt intense stupefaction, but he couldn't accurately describe that woman's appearance. It was hazy and obscure as if they were separated by a fog. Inside it, he faintly saw Halfmoon, Gu Yanying, and even tracing back to an even more distant past, that ignorant first love of his former life. His mind was captivated, his heart was intoxicated.

Diao Fei stared fixedly at Cotton Rose, his mouth mumbling, “A’Ning!” He entirely disregarded the wine in his hand already splashed all over the floor, many many memories surfacing into his mind, those intertwined joys and pains carved in his bones and engraved in his heart. He wanted to protect her. Possess her.

Cotton Rose snickered sly and proud inside. Doing something like this was just like a casual fiddle of the fingers for her, incomparably effortless. The target this time was a mere teenage kid, that was even easier. She’d already begun to think about how to make use of him, earn some more spirit pills. They said the pay of an Eagle Wolf guard was very good, she should be able to squeeze out quite some gain. However he was at a mere trivial first level of qi refining and shouldn’t be able to withstand her squeezing for too long. The other one actually, maybe he could allow her cultivation to break through once more and reach the third level.

“Dong Dong Dong.” A few slight sounds came from the porcelain jar at Li Qingshan’s hips, sobering his mind. Little An was extremely well-behaved and hadn’t been willing so far to embarrass Li Qingshan, staying extremely quiet inside the jar all along. Such an action actually happened for the first time.

Li Qingshan immediately felt something wrong with himself. He operated the [Spirit Turtle Sea Guarding Secrets]. The monster core inside him shaped like a turtle shell began to spin and release light, quelling everything. Whether the restless true qi, or his messy fluttering thoughts, everything was thoroughly repressed.

His mind suddenly became clear. The spiritual qi revolved to his eyes and he once again look at the woman called Cotton Rose. The layer of dense fog covering her face dispersed at once, and that face that drew the soul and twined the dreams suddenly became commonplace. It wasn’t as beautiful as her dancing partners to the side, or even as the attending maids. Even the expression on her face appeared extremely fake and phony, no longer as touching as

before.

This feeling was just the same as seeing beautiful women without makeup on the internet in his previous life, it was simply too appalling a sight. But this was much more brilliant, she could actually influence the senses, bring out the most beautiful women inside your heart, making you swayed by yourself.

Those people, they didn't come to meet this woman, they clearly wished to see those women inside their hearts. This female thus so shamefully used the most beautiful place inside someone.

Was this the bewitching art from the tales and legends? Li Qingshan twisted his brows. He wasn't a fool, he immediately understood the deep malice therein. He originally thought that with his strength, even if he couldn't run rampant inside Blessed Peace, there still weren't any opponent he couldn't handle. That was why he was able to come inside the Pavilion of Cloud and Rain without the slightest worry, confident no one needed even think about harming him as long as he controlled himself. But there was a much greater variety of treacherous ploys in this mortal world than what he imagined.

Reportedly, cultivators would encounter all sorts of outer devils in the process of cultivation, confusing one's mind and ruining one's cultivation. Wouldn't that be precisely the creature in front of him?

He look at Diao Fei beside him. He looked simply infatuated, watching Cotton Rose. But Cotton Rose was watching Li Qingshan instead, stunned. She hadn't thought someone could escape from her bewitching technique. She couldn't help but retreat a step under the intense stare of those eyes.

“Pa.” A resounding slap.

Ge Jian and the brothel keeper exchanged a glance then hurriedly went into the room. They saw Li Qingshan standing there, sending Diao Fei down to the floor with a slap, the clear imprint of his five

fingers left on his face, a trail of blood flowing from the corner of his mouth. One could easily tell how harsh that slap had been.

The furious Diao Fei wanted to fight back, but a hand clutched his neck like a pair of metal pincers, and a fearsome killing aura checked his movements back. He felt that his neck would be squeezed broken if he dared make the slightest motion.

“What are you doing?”

Li Qingshan lifted him in front of Cotton Rose. “You have a good look!”

Diao Fei was already subconsciously operating his true qi, anger and fear breaking his earlier state, while Cotton Rose seemed to have forgotten to employ her bewitching art because of her alarm. Then, just like Li Qingshan earlier, Diao Fei saw that astonishing change and immediately became stunned. This wasn't his A'Ning, A'Ning was now already gone.

The madam cried in alarm, “Whawhawhat are you doing?”

Ge Jian said in a righteous tone, “Stop!”

Li Qingshan let go of Diao Fei. “He looked too ugly just now, I couldn't help myself from hitting him.”

Diao Fei landed softly on the ground, saying only after a long while, “Thanks!” One who'd come from a sect like him knew much more about bewitching arts than Li Qingshan, knew how he would end if he were to succumb to them. Once the poison sank deep, even parents or children couldn't awaken one from their obsession.

Li Qingshan pointed at Cotton Rose and said to the brothel keeper, “Tell this ugly woman to get lost, otherwise I soon likewise won't be able to help myself.”

Cotton Rose said in a shrill voice, “How dare you!” This was even a duck voice. She was already used to toying with men in the palm of her hand thanks her bewitching art, when had she ever been

treated like this? She was especially furious about the words “ugly woman,” but that actually made her face seem even more twisted, uglier.

The brothel keeper said, “Master Ge, this newcomer of yours, isn’t he really a little too ignorant of rules and customs?” A small qi refining warrior at the first level, where did he get the gall to be so rude to her. She’d have acted already were it not for his status as an Eagle Wolf guard.

Li Qingshan’s figure suddenly disappeared from where he stood, reappeared in front of Cotton Rose. He lifted his right arm and ruthlessly swung it.

Within ten steps, one man was more fearsome than a remote enemy country.

Li Qingshan perfectly put this saying into practice thanks to a formidable physique. Cotton Rose’s cultivation was at the second level of qi refining, but she specialized in bewitching arts and didn’t excel in battle. Neither, it seemed, did she expect Li Qingshan to do something as cruddy as hitting a woman in front of so many people.

You effing got me counterfeit goods, use a fake belle to scam me, you’re even bold enough to say I don’t understand rules and customs. You’re in a bad mood, this father’s in an even worse mood. The wrath at having his feelings deceived, the shame at nearly falling into the trap, all of this made his mood poor to the extreme.

The reaction reached his hand, made his arm blur into a curve, stiffly lash out and produce the sound of a whip splitting the air. The blow made Cotton Rose spin round and round where she stood like a spinning top, half her face swelling up, two teeth flying out. She sat down on the floor, dull and giddy!

The maids and dancers were all stupefied. This missus Cotton Rose was the queen courtesan of the Pavilion of Cloud and Rain.

She'd always acted high and mighty. Any servant would taste the whip if the tea they brought were but a little too warm or a little too cold. If one spoke offensive words and called her appearance into question, that was a road straight to the land of the dead.

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The men were as subservient as loyal dogs to Fu Rong(Previously translated as Cotton Rose), never dreaming of the possibility that she would ever get slapped by a man!

The madam angrily retaliated towards Li Qing Shan, with her pair of fat arms full of True Qi. Fu Rong was not only the Pavillion of Cloud and Rain's most beautiful flower, but also her disciple. Unexpectedly, Ge Jian blocked her way and only then did the madam forcefully stay her hands. "How dare you!"

Ge Jian coldly retorted : " Do you wish to attack the Eagle Wolf Guard?" He was also at lost for words. As long as Li Qing Shan was a member of the Guard, he could not ignore this situation as it concerned the Guard's honor. Most importantly, he suspected that with just the madam's strength, it was difficult to defeat Li Qing Shan.

The Pavillion of Cloud and Rain gave Zhuo Zhi Buo a huge amount of medicinal pills annually, as well as various women for him to enjoy. This helper of his of course got his fair share as well and was not willing to see the Pavillion lose out.

The madam took a few deep breaths and said "Very well!", dragging the shocked Fu Rong outside.

Li Qing Shan then sat back down and replied : "Quickly, I am still waiting for the next show! Surely your Pavillion must have more than just that right? Brother Ge, I am still waiting!"

Listening in to this from the outside, Fu Rong loudly howled : " I want to kill him! I want to kill him!"

Ge Jian turned back, the gloominess in his face all gone, smiling helplessly : "Qing Shan, if you don't like her then so be it, why hit her? Women skilled in the art of bewitchment are rare. Occasionally enjoying such arts would not be of any hindrance to

yourself." This confused even Diao Fei who suspected whether Ge Jian was intentionally trying to harm them.

"It was only just a bitch! So what if I hit her!" Li Qing Shan rested on the soft sofa, propping his chin before the servants beside him plucked a grape and fed it to him gently.

This Pavillion actually dared to collaborate with Zhuo Zhi Buo to harm him. He wanted to learn from Lu Ti Xia(Character from Water Margin), first demanding for 10 pounds of lean meat, cut cleanly and without fat. Then he wanted 10 pounds of fat, without a trace of meat on it. Lastly, he wanted 10 pounds of bone, chopped into strips, without any meat on it. (Symbolises how Qing Shan wishes to extort them mercilessly)

For the next few ladies that came, if they were skinny, he wanted plump ones, smacking the madam's face. If they were fat, he wanted the leaner ones, also smacking the madam's face. This wasn't like Lu Ti Xia, but more of a certain theatric performance.

"I'll go have a look!" Ge Jian walked outside, anger visibly on his face. He didn't expect that with the Pavillion's means, they were still unable to conquer a mere hillbilly. But he could not fall out with him now, as long as Zhuo Zhi Buo had not clarified his relationship with Gu Yan Ying, Zhuo Zhi Buo would not dare to fall out with Qing Shan. And if Zhuo Zhi Buo did not dare to, so would Ge Jian.

Most importantly, he was worried that if he fell out with Qing Shan, he would still not be this kid's match. The slap just now astonished Ge Jian. Within 10 steps, if Li Qing Shan suddenly attacked, it would be as quick as a tiger, even he did not dare guarantee if he would win. Was body refinement truly this strong?

After 15 minutes, Ge Jian returned with the madam behind him, smiling as if nothing happened. It was unknown what Ge Jian did, but he brought along 7 to 8 young girls, whether lean or plump, each of them had proper bearings, aging from 14 to 17 years old.



"This young man doesn't seem to like matured women. These are all the newly trained escorts, guaranteed to be pure. Why not you try picking one or two as a servant back home. Prices are negotiable." The madam pinched the cheeks of one of the girls and introduced her to Qing Shan.

Those escorts leaked out their stares of expectation when looking at Qing Shan. Being able to leave this place would be their greatest wish. Notwithstanding the fact that the man himself was a young and strong lad, and not those fat merchants or old men.

Ge Jian remarked: " I believe that you should have a person or two to serve you at home. With such a big bed, you surely cannot take up all of it." After seeing that he could not finish the task that Zhuo Zhi Bo entrusted him with, Ge Jian came up with another scheme. Seeing that the kid was loyal to his friends, as long as he had another burden alongside him, he could have something to threaten him with.

Seeing these girls rounded up like cattle, Qing Shan felt a fleet of sadness. Upon looking at the madam, he even felt disgusted and could not help but feel an urge to stab her with his knife. But he knew, that in this day and age, the Pavillion was a proper establishment and plenty of girls, due to the age's preference of boys over girls, were sent here due to their family's inability or reluctance to raise them.

Qing Shan asked : "Are all of you willing?"

The girls looked at each other, and finally nodded, acknowledging his question.

Qing Shan only felt that he was doused with cold water: " It'll be up to here today, I'm going back to sleep!" he walked outside and when he passed a young girl she stuffed a piece of paper in his hands.

Qing Xiu looked at his majestic back hopefully. It had been many years since she was kidnapped. Originally, she was in despair, but

Qing Shan's slap reinvigorated her hope. Doing this kind of daring thing, he was obviously different from the rest. If it was him, maybe she could request for help to save herself and her friends. This noble seemed to be a good man and may even help them.

However, she saw Qing Shan suddenly stop and open the paper before asking her " Is this what you gave me?"

All the eyes in the room focused on Qing Xiu, especially the madam's. Seeing the words on the paper, she instantly looked murderous.

Qing Xiu lowered her head and felt as if a knife was at her back. Recalling those who tried to escape or betrayed the Pavillion, she despaired and regretted while complaining in her heart about Qing Shan. Are you a fool? Did you know how deep this Pavillion runs? Now I am dead because of you!

Qing Shan kept the paper and patted her shoulders: " Just now when I asked you, why didn;t you say so? If you said it earlier then it would be way easier." This honourable one sharpened my blade for 10 years with a heroic spirit, only to encounter such unfair acts!

Qing Shan felt he was very friendly, but Qing Xiu was becoming paler and paler.

The madam saw that Qing Shan was here to pick a fight, so she dragged Qing Xiu behind her: " She's gone crazy. Don't take her words to heart." Qing Xiu was always obedient, never resisting her orders. The madam thought her training was sufficient before releasing her to meet the clientele but unexpectedly at such an important timing, she chose to do this. When they got back, she would torture her to death to set an example for the rest.

Qing Shan replied : " Didn't you lot want me to pick? I choose her! "

The madam said: " Take her away!" while smiling at Qing Shan: " Our Pavillion has plenty of girls, letting you choose this crazy one

was truly bad luck!"

Immediately, two strong bodyguards took Qing Xiu outside.

"Stop right there!" Qing Shan took a step forward as he was about to chase but the madam's fat body nimbly moved to block him. Qing Shan wanted to go around her, but Ge Jian held onto his hand : "Qing Shan, where are you going? It's just another bitch!"

This was what Qing Shan just said, but Qing Shan immediately replied : "You are the bitch! Let go of me!" With a tremble of his arm, Qing Shan broke free from Ge Jian's hold with brute strength. Ge Jian immediately raged : "What did you say?" As a prim and proper Eagle Wolf Guard member, Ge Jian was scolded as a bitch and could not endure his anger any longer.

The 2 bodyguards were clearly martial artists and moved quickly, instantly leaving the room and blending in with the crowd.

Qing Shan didn't bother with him, colliding with the meat wall in front of him. The madam felt like she crashed against a stampeding elephant, breaking the window and the corridor railings as she fell from the seventh floor.

She screamed in mid-air: " Stop him!" Her fat hand reached out with True Qi as she grasped her way back to the corridor of the 3rd floor.

Qing Shan followed the hole that the madam created, only to see that Qing Xiu was missing. But he sniffed the air and caught onto her scent.

Among the 6 senses, the one sense he surpassed other humans was in the sense of smell. Normal Qi Practitioners, upon opening their meridians, would have enhanced sense of sight and hearing, able to hear a fly mid-flight as well as an ant walking within a hundred Zhang but their sense of smell would not have greatly increased. It would not even match up to a wild dog. This was the limitations of Xian Tian.

But Qing Shan's sense of smell was already way stronger than that of a dog's, as he followed the trail of the scent.

"Where does this young man wish to go to?" A few exquisite lady performers rushed out from nowhere, filling up the corridors as they grabbed his limbs.

"Scram!" Qing Shan did not bother to appreciate their beauty as he exhaled with True Qi, causing the girls to fly away.

Deng deng deng. A yellow shirted bodyguard came down from the 6th floor as he heard the madam's scream. Coming out from the room next door, he recognised Qing Shan and blocked his way, clearly a First Rate Warrior.

He had just thrown out another First Rate Warrior from the Pavillion and was feeling proud as ever. Seeing Qing Shan walk over, even though he was a Qi Refining Practitioner, but he was only of the First Level, hence he believed he could be a match for him, winning him even. This kind of brat that relied on his natural talent to refine Qi was clearly not within his eyes as he shouted at him : " Stop right there!"

"If it were just weak women then never mind them, most likely they are just being forced to follow orders. A big man as yourself that dares to help the wicked to kidnap and abuse others deserves to die!" Qing Shan remarked as he kept walking. Some time or another, he already had the Severing Wing Blade in his hands and the glistening blade shined as it left its sheath.

The bodyguard had wanted to make a move, but suddenly felt his neck grow cold before flying up in the sky. In mid-air, he saw his own body. A few bodyguards wanted to come help and they conveniently saw his head fly up with a pillar of blood gushing out of his neck. Their legs were nailed to the ground, not daring to take another step forward.

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Li Qingshan lifted his foot and kicked the headless corpse downstairs.

The men and women downstairs were still confused upon hearing the madam's scream when the a bloody headless corpse suddenly fell in front of them. After a moment of silence, someone amongst the crowd screamed: "Murder!"

Downstairs, it was like an explosion took place. Li Qing Shan laughed, as he glanced aside, he caught a glimpse of Qing Xiu's clothes as she was brought to the opposite fourth floor.

Li Qingshan plunged from the sky, akin to a tiger preying on its food or an eagle catching a rabbit, as he leapt across to the next patio.

Qing Xiu was filled with despair, when the wind suddenly blew into her. She then looked in front, seeing Qing Shan who returned his blade to his sheathe. The bodyguards holding onto Qing Xiu spat out blood fervently, before falling backwards.

"You ... .." Qing Xiu was speechless for a while. Daring to kill in the pavillion, Qing Shan was a bold and overblown figure she had never expected to see in her lifetime. This was totally different from her idea of him at the start.

Li Qing Shan said: "What injustice have you suffered. Feel free to give me all your complaints now!"

Amidst the chaos in the building, the bodyguards surrounded the area in all directions.

Qing XIu show hurriedly said: "I ... .. I was caught by them, and not voluntarily. If I did not want to, then I would be beaten and not given food to eat! I also have to practice their strange skills, and if I do not practice then I will also be beaten, and not allowed to eat "

"Bitch, shut up!" The madam roared as she directly hit the floor of the fourth floor. However, all she could see was Li Qing Shan's murderous eyes.

"You came at the right time!" Li Qing Shan exclaimed loudly, as his knife released a wind blade towards her face.

The madam had never seen such a ferocious person. With only a few words to say, he gave the killing blow immediately. She often played the role of the usher and had long forgotten when she last directly took part in combat. In the midst of her shock, she could not even exert half of her strength and fell back to the 3rd floor while screaming.

Looking up, she saw Li Qingshan at the top of the hole. Both hands holding his knife and plunging straight down. She did not even manage to take out her treasure pouch to retrieve her talisman. Maybe she was scared stiff, but she instinctively rolled across the floor like a ball.

A good combatant, a poor combatant. One who relied on his strong tough body to directly conquer a 2nd level Qi Practitioner. Yet the other spent her time and effort on dual cultivation, the art of bedding. Even though she was a 3rd level Qi Practitioner, she only had a 2nd level Qi Practitioner level of strength.

There was a burst of blood. His knife cut a large piece of meat from her ass and the madam screamed a pig-like scream, no longer having the heart to retaliate.

Li Qing Shan, stepped off a wall, stomping on the back of the madam. He revealed a cruel smile: "You old hag, let's see where you escape off to this time!"

When the madam tried to struggle, she felt like an iron pile was pressing down and that her bones were breaking. A sharp blade then flashed in front of her face so that she does not dare to move.

A sword stabbed from behind. While the blade has not yet

reached, it spat out a three feet long green light. Fu Rong viciously gripped her sword as she pierced Li Qing Shan from behind.

"Great!" Li Qing Shan was not shock in the least. He shifted his body so that the blade would slide pass him. Even the 3rd level Qi Practitioner madam lost, not to mention this 2nd level Qi Practitioner Fu Rong. With a flick of his wrist, he grabbed Fu Rong's neck in an instance and pulled her before him.

Stepping on an enemy with his foot while grabbing another in his hands, it was truly a "one stone kills two bird" scenario.

Li Qingshan pointed his knife at the madam: "You as a Qi Practitioner are above tens of thousands of others, with a secure way of life, yet you still want to commit such a heavenly sin. You truly deserve death."

The madam exclaimed loudly: "Hero, please spare my life!"

"You? I cannot forgive!" Li Qing Shan then stabbed down with his knife.

"Stop!" Two voices sounded at the same time, one was Cui Jian, the other was not Diao Fei, but rather a middle-aged man dressed in a sapphire blue gown. A non-existent figure appeared on the third floor, a 5th level Qi Practitioner, born with a feminine face, coldly stating: "This guest seems to be very unsatisfied with our service."

He was the real owner of the Pavillion, Zhao Liang Qing. He usually only let the old woman outside greet guests, hiding behind the scenes, and using the women in the pavilion as Qi furnaces.

Zhuo Zhi Bo's plan to take down the new kid, of course, was brought up to Liang Qing so as to set up the trap in the pavilion. Liang Qing did not mind as he foresaw Zhi Bo as an eagle swooping down on his prey, clearly with no good end for Qing Shan. However, he could never have predicted that Fu Rong would not only be taken away, but also cause such a disturbance to the

surroundings.

Li Qing Shan estimated that with his demon form, he could completely defeat 2nd Level Qi Practitioners and win 3rd Level Qi Practitioners with great probability. 4th Level Qi Practitioners would be tough but 5th Level Qi Practitioners would be impossible.

He shouted: "Ge Jian, please invite brother Zhuo, I found a forced prostitutes nest! As a dignified Eagle Wolves Guard, why would I fear these bastards!" His cry, full of True Qi, shattered a few glasses and caused many people's ears to buzz.

Brother Zhuo! Ge Jian almost lost his footing. He personally saw Li Qing Shan's arrogance when facing Zhuo Zhi Bo. But now he insisted on calling him brother Zhuo, clearly pulling Zhuo Zhi Bo and the Eagle Wolf Guard to becoming his shield.

Zhao Liang Qing also frowned. Although Li Qing Shan demonstrated extraordinary strength for a Qi Practitioner, he was confident of killing him, but he did not dare to.

Not only because of the two hostages in the hands of Li Qing Shan, but also because of the identity of the Eagle Wolf Guard. The Eagle Wolf Guard is not immortal, on the contrary, because of the various dangerous tasks, the casualty rate is not low. If a guard died in his task or assassination, and the murderer could not be identified then it would be left as an unresolved investigation.

However, if a Eagle Wolf Guard was to be killed in a crowd, that is to challenge the authority of the Eagle Wolf Guard and would be wanted by the heavens. Even Zhuo Zhi Bo could not let him go but instead have to kill him and clear off any and all relations to him. If he was a lone cultivator, perhaps there he would have the guts to kill him, but he has such a large enterprise under him, which made him even more afraid of doing so.

Li Qing Shan smiled, as expected, this layer of wolf skin plays quite a big role. Being a dog of the law and order and not being able to use that identity would be plain foolish. Since Zhuo Zhi Bo



wanted to be his big brother, then let him be.

Zhao Liang Qing said: "Please release my people!"

"They all forced girls into prostitution. Criminals that harm innocent young girls, must not be released. Also, I need you to stay put as well. As a representative of the Eagle Wolf Guard, I need to investigate the case. You can remain silent, but everything and anything you say may be held against you." Li Qing Shan did not know what to say, so he used the common line from his previous life, totally ignoring the fact that Zhao Liang Qing was a 5th Level Qi Practitioner.

Zhao Liang Qing face blushed: "Forced prostitution? Where is your evidence?"

Li Qing Shan replied: "I have a witness!"

Zhao Liang Qing coldly questioned: "Then where is that proof?"

Li Qing Shan's pupils constricted, as he saw the two bodyguards holding onto a dejected Qing Xiu.

Zhao Liang Qing held onto her chin, "Not bad, she does look quite pretty. No wonder she attracted such a lovely busybody. I guess you can release my women now!"

Qing Xiu eyes teared as she stared at Li Qing Shan. Now I am really doomed!

Li Qing Shan replied: "That is the girl in your pavilion, what relationship does she have with me!"

Zhao Liang Qing said: "Oh, is that so? Then I guess this root of troubles should be removed!" Liang Qing's hand was placed on her shoulders, and while he was about to slowly exert force, Qing Xiu let out a scream.

However that was immediately overshadowed by a more mournful screams, scaring Qing Xiu till her mouth shut. Li Qing Shan cut down on the madam's arm, threatening Liang Qing with

reddish eyes: "You dare to try harming her? "

Only stupid heroes would surrender when the enemies used hostages as threats. Qing Shan would do no such thing, if you were harsh then he would only be harsher.

Ge Jian finally gave up on trying to deal with this matter on his own. Qing Shan was ferocious as if he was born out of the wild, repaying an eye for an eye. This all happened today because of his retaliation towards Zhuo Zhi Bo's trap. And all that had transpired from there was clearly not in his control. He crushed a spiritual talisman, which was an Eagle Wolf Guard aid request talisman to relay that there was an urgent crisis ongoing.

Zhao Liangqing looked at Li Qingshan, but he did not start, but did not dare to act. He clearly saw that from the eyes of Li Qing Shan, if he dared to kill Qing Xie, Li Qing Shan would decapitate his two trusted subordinates. That was a loss that could not be tolerated. On one hand was one of his many prostitutes and the other was his two important subordinates. Whichever was of higher priority, he could clearly distinguish.

His eyes flashed, practising his cultivation technique, in the eyes of the public, the somewhat feminine Zhao Liang Qing suddenly changed, becoming as fearsome as a legendary devil. A fierce atmosphere pressured itself on the hearts of the people, as a few bodyguards fell down weakly.

Almost roaring: "As I ordered, release them!" In the pavilion, other than charming others, their technique could also take on the other end of the spectrum. They could simulate demonic figures and intimidate people by directly influencing the human mind. The moment Liang Qing cast it out the whole Pavillion quietened down. Everyone felt a terrifying existence emerge, and did not dare to even breathe out loud, let alone shout and run. Even Ge Jian Zhao did not dare to look at Liang Qing's face. As the one being stared at directly, how would Qing Shan bear the pressure?

But Li Qing Shan only smiled and said: "I order you to let her go!" He was originally a demon, with a cultivation greater than that of Zhao Liang Qing. The charm was effective against him, because his body was filled with great vitality and stronger than the average man. He could only run the Spiritual Turtle Dominates The Seas Scripture to suppress the charm. However, intimidating him was another matter altogether. Liang Qing was merely showing off to a true master. Even without using the scripture, he would not be scared. Believe it or not, how about I show you my true form to really scare you!

Zhao Liang Qing saw that his threat was useless and could only give up, staring at Qing Shan. If stares could take the form of swords, Qing Shan would be pierced already.

"What are you looking at? Look some more and see what I do to your eyes, no, watch how I pluck her eyes out." Li Qing Shan's knife gestured at the foot of the madam.

"What do you want?"

Li Qing Shan pointed at Qing Xiu: "Give me back my witness!"

"Forget about it!" Zhao Liang Qing's voice barely made it out of his mouth before Li Qing Shan began cutting onto the madam's other arm. "Anyways I have two. After killing one I still have another to play with!"

## Chapter 124

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The madam cried out: "Oh great Sir, please save me!" As expected of a Qi Practitioner, she has not passed out from the pain yet.

Upon looking at the bloody scene and hearing that she would be next, Fu Rong shouted out in alarm "Help ..." However she was choked out mid-sentence.

"Stop, let go of Fu Rong!" The pavilion got rowdy once again.

Crowds had gathered along the railings of the entire building. Looking upon this rare commotion, they burst into chatter and discussion.

"Isn't the Eagle Wolf Guard the backer of the pavilion? Why are they going against each other today!?" Walls have ears, and given the pavilion's dirty dealings in town, the pavilion would have closed down ages ago without the protection and cover provided by the Eagle Wolf Guard. After all, people with discerning eyes are everywhere.

"That punk hit Fu Rong!"

"What? How dare he!" Many seethed with rage. To them, Fu Rong was the goddess of their dreams. Even if she was miles out of their reach, they would not let others bully her.

"Look at this! Fu Rong is currently being strangled by that punk!" This caused a burst of outrage. Fu Rong's grimaced. Pain and suffering filled her beautiful face. The scene was heart-breaking, and onlookers couldn't help but feel a stinging pain within their chests.

"Ah Ning!" Even though Diao Fei had been smacked awake by Qing Shan and saw Fu Rong's true appearance, he still felt somewhat confused and seduced. He fiercely bit down on his own tongue to clear his mind.

Fu Rong's cry for help spurred into action several martial artists.

Even the non-martial artists started cursing and scolding Qing Shan. A tsunami of voices raged throughout the pavilion, issuing a call to arms against Qing Shan: "Put down Miss Fu Rong, else I will not let you die a pleasant death!"

"Hmph, nothing but a group of fools!" Li Qingshan coldly harrumphed. His voice was not loud but it easily overwhelmed the raging tsunami, and echoed within the heads of all around him.

He only looked at Zhao Liang Qing: "Are you going to release her now?" The sabre (it's more like an Odachi... but its Chinese. Should be called a long sabre but that's quite a mouthful.) in his hand already placed horizontally against the Madam's neck.

Zhao Liang Qing's hands quivered as he released Qing Xiu. She rubbed her sore shoulders and quickly trotted over to Li Qing Shan's side, carefully avoiding pools of blood on the ground. Qing Xiu glanced over at the Madam's predicament. Despite knowing that the Madam had done many evil deeds and had caused the death of many of her sisters, she felt a pang of pity in her heart.

Looking back at Qing Shan, he showed no sign of emotional fluctuation. His lips slowly curled into a cruel grin. Since he was going to become a hero, of course he would need to have greater determination than that of normal people. Punishing criminals and purging evil was after all one of the world's most satisfying things to do.

"Li Qing Shan, what are you doing!?" Zhuo Zhi Bo angrily rushed in, followed by Qian Rong Zhi and a handful of other Eagle Wolf Guard members. Seeing the scene at the pavilion, they were taken aback.

Zhuo Zhi Bo thought to himself that his scheme's perfection lied in the fact that even if Qing Shan did not take the bait, he would not be blamed. He had so kindly instructed for his men to bring Qing Shan to a brothel for enjoyment. How can anyone possibly accuse him of ill-treatment? Even if Qing Shan really had some

relation with Gu Yan Ying, there is no way that he could tell her that he was tricked, or something bad happened when he was visiting a brothel. Li Qing Shan would only end up walking a path to death if he fell for the trap, and even if he did not he would still have to suffer in silence. Taking all this into account, this plan could be considered airtight and nothing short of perfection.

In actuality, if not for Qing Xiu, besides slapping Fu Rong in the face, Li Qing Shan could only endure his anger and seek revenge another day. However with Qing Xiu as an excuse, he is determined to stir up a storm for Zhuo Zhi Bo. Qing Shan wanted to show Zhi Bo - since you dared to set a trap, I will tear this place down.

Zhao Liang Qing said: "Commander Zhuo, is this the way your Eagle Wolf Guard does things? If you do not pay for our services then so be it! You lot still dare to meddle into our business and seek trouble!"

"Is that so? That is simply overly bullying people!"

"Pavilion leaders, what are you going to do?"

"Quickly release Fu Rong! If you harm a single hair on Fu Rong's head, I'll cut you into a thousand pieces! "

Not paying for escort services? That is a lot of dirt on someone's name. If he had to bear such a bad reputation, Qing Shan would not be able to continue living in Jia Ping City. Acting as if he was not the one who ordered Ge Jian to bring Qing Shan here in the first place. Zhuo Zhi Bo also gave a solemn look: "Qing Shan, is that true?"

"No it's not true! They ..." Qing Xiu raised her voice and tried explaining the truth while behind Qing Shan, but was slowly covered by the sea of voices.

Li Qing Shan didn't bother spouting nonsense. With a pop, he inserted the long sabre into the Madam's heart and then pulled it

back out without a single bloodstain on it.

You scold me, I hit the madam. You hit me, I also hit the madam. You falsely ruin my reputation, then I'll simply kill the Madam.

"You ... .." Zhao Liang Qing became furious. Li Qing Shan then casually placed the knife on Fu Rong's neck, and said to himself: "One down, one to go!" He then kicked the huge body down the stairs. A kill is a kill, take it while he can.

The entire pavilion knew of the madam. Who did not know of this ruthless and cunning fat woman? She operated in the city of Jia Ping for many years, from ushering to entertaining guests, she has always been in charge of operations in the pavilion, a famous person to say the least. Yet now she was just killed in one swift thrust of a sabre, becoming another corpse.

The surrounding instantly turned quiet. Everyone wanted to ask, who is this youth? Why was he so ruthless?

Zhuo Zhi Bo did not think that Li Qing Shan would dare to be so daring in front of him. He was anger filled his chest, if not considering a certain person, he would not let this be. Qian Rong Zheng grew a shred of fear in her heart. That youth that just killed whilst chatting with a smile on his face was not like the other men she met in her life, and was definitely not that easy to deal with.

When Li Qing Shan pulled Fu Rong up, Zhao Liang Qing finally could not help but cry out: "You dare?" That was his cash cow. The foundation of the entire pavilion practically lied on her body. If the madam died, a replacement could be sought. If Fu Rong died, the entire pavilion might as well close down.

Li Qing Shan turned to Zhuo Zhi Bo and said: " Commander Zhuo, this pavilion is filled with plenty of filth. Forcing young girls to become escorts! The young girl beside me is a witness, please take charge and administer justice accordingly!"

Zhao Liang Qing also looked over at Zhi Bo, seemingly to say,

“Remember the volumes of medicine that I gift you every year.”

This situation gave Zhuo Zhi Bo a great headache. Amongst everyone, he was the one that dabbled into the most matters, yet afraid to harm his own interests no matter what action he took. He was originally planning on using his authority and power to peacefully enjoy his golden years. Asking him to take the risk to kill Li Qing Shan was something he would never dare to do. But if he agreed with Li Qing Shan's views, then he would only be slapping himself in his own face and cutting off a source of wealth.

Li Qing Shan saw through his mentality, savagely giving him a check. Needless to say, The reason he dared to take such a gamble under the threat of two strong Qi Practitioners had a direct relation to his own indomitable personal strength.

Even in the worst case scenario, he could just escape with his own hidden strength. Just releasing a bit of Demonic Qi would enable him to easily escape from this place. However evidently, it seemed his concerns were excessive.

Zhuo Zhi Bo said earnestly: "Qing Shan, you are too impulsive, this case is up to the magistrate level. It's not up to me to decide!"

Zhao Liang Qing looked at Zhuo Zhi Bo incredulously, thinking, “because of your scheme, I have lost so many, yet you brush it off as impulsive?”

Zhuo Zhi Bo immediately stared back fiercely, reminding Zhao Liang Qing that there was a difference in strength and authority between them. This left Liang Qing to swallow his own broken teeth ( idiom to represent the unwilling acceptance of one's injuries). “What a great move by Zhuo Zhi Bo!”, thought Liang Qing sarcastically.

"This judge is here! Whatever cases you may have, feel free to speak up!"

At this moment, Zhou Wen Bin stepped into the pavilion in his



bright red ceremonial clothes.

"Lord Zhou!" "Lord Zhou has arrived!"

In the pavilion, no matter the civilians or the noble guests, all kneeled before the man. They kneeled wholeheartedly. In their eyes, there was not only fear due to his power, but also passionate respect due to his conduct.

Li Qing Shan realised only then, that Zhou Wen Bin commanded such respect from the citizens of the city. He deduced that the piece of paper that Qing Xiu had stuffed into his hand could possibly be requesting him to approach this Zhou Wen Bin for help.

Zhou Wen Bin alone earned more respect than that of Zhuo Zhi Bo and his group. He gently said: "Everyone please rise."

Zhou Wen Bin glanced at Zhuo Zhi Bo, then looked at Qing Shan. He knew about the huge mess that occurred in the pavilion at the very first moment. Not only did he know, but he even deduced clearly the sequence of events that occurred as well as the scheme that Zhuo Zhi Bo had devised. Looking at Li Qing Shan, he thought to himself: "This kid is really a genius at stirring trouble, throwing a sprat to catch a mackerel, he managed to put Zhuo Zhi Bo in a spot."

Zhuo Zhi Bo coldly said: "Lord Zhou sure came in at the right time!"

Zhou Wen Bin laughed: "That is true, that is true!" Waving his sleeves, he seemingly floated to Qing Shan and asked despite knowing: "Qing Shan, what may you be doing?"

"She had some grievances. I wanted to take her to the county hall to meet you my lord, but I did not think there would be villains blocking the road. I thought to myself, since I am an Eagle Wolf Guard, I should be honourable, awe-inspiring and just. Purging evil, punishing these villains and serving the people should be my

responsibility, so why should I be scared of these second rate thugs? Hence, I accidentally killed a few. My lord, please be the judge to this situation” Li Qing Shan then pulled Qing Xiu from behind him and passed the note in his hand to Zhou Wen Bin.

Those idioms instantly triggered Zhuo Zhi Bo. His eyebrows twitched incessantly and he cursed and swore in his mind, wanting to do nothing but cut down Qing Shan.

“This one originated from the town of Yu Er Gou. I was playing at a riverside seven years ago when I was kidnapped and brought here...” Qing Xiu bowed respectfully and her speech became more fluent, she had obviously been rehearsing this speech numerous times in her heart.

Zhao Liang Qing said: “My lord, this is slander! We bought this girl for 20 silver, we even have a receipt as proof. She only wants to escape which is why she came up with such lies to deceive you.”

Qing Xiu retorted: “No that’s not true, I am not, you are the one lying...”

Zhou Wen Bin raised his hand to quell the dispute, “This lord will certainly investigate this case thoroughly and will neither wrong an innocent man nor let a guilty man off.”

Under his orders, 20 over men filed in orderly. Even though they were not Qi Practitioners, they were highly skilled at martial arts. Under Qing Xiu’s supervision, they went off to rescue the other girls, but after a while of searching, they returned empty handed. Clearly, the girls had long been moved away.

“My lord please oversee this matter!” Zhao Liang Qing then took a receipt from a lackey which clearly showed that Qing Xiu was bought for 20 silver by the pavilion.

On the verge of tears, Qing Xiu cried out desperately, “My lord, I did not lie!”

Zhou Wen Bin gently said: “Do not worry, I will send someone to

your hometown to investigate." In his mind, he was clear that these kind places that sheltered filth and bred evil were definitely not clean. It was evident who was speaking the truth.

# Chapter 125

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Over the years, Zhou Wen Bin invested over 2 million Silver in Jia Ping City, reducing the common taxes which then led to the bustling state of Jia Ping City today. As a county magistrate, he not only refused to take any bribes, but also raised the funds by himself and handled the state affairs so well that there was not even have a beggar in the streets of Jia Ping City.

Because of this, he was welcomed with such a strong reception the moment he came to the Pavilion. Of course, he did so not just because of his education by the saints and his ambition to become a good official for the people, but also because he had greater considerations as a Qi Refining practitioner.

However, under such governance, very few people would want to sell their daughters to this horrible establishment. For this brothel, there would thus be not enough fresh "supply". Therefore, the Pavilion would have to make do, even with unscrupulous means.

The Pavilion relied on its relationship with Zhuo Zhi Bo, and the background of the Pavilion in and of itself. Usually, the Pavilion never gave this magistrate much consideration, only giving perfunctory greetings in festivals. Wen Bin did indeed fear the Pavilion somewhat, and was not really willing to cause trouble there, usually disregarding the extremely infamous Pavilion. However, now that there was a person taking on the role of the vanguard, he would be willing to take the opportunity to do something beneficial for himself by exerting some pressure on the Pavilion. Of course, he would only be pressing down on them slightly. To remove the Pavilion in one swoop would be impossible.

Li Qing Shan knitted his eyebrows, long expecting the result deep down inside. If the Pavilion was so easy to destroy, they would not be able to remain in business till now. Even if he personally went

down to the fishing village to check, it would be all for naught.

All in all, every man counts, whether he saved a person or killed a thief, at least someone was saved or punished. He did not believe that he could eradicate the Pavilion in a single moment as well. For these evil organisations, even if they could not be removed in a moment, they should still be punished cruelly, and quite clearly the impact of the punishment was still not enough even now.

Zhao Liang Qing's face showed a creepily smug smile: "Lord Zhou, since there is nothing, please judge Li Qing Shan for his murder of the innocent as well as get him to release Fu Rong."

The last sentence actually attracted a response from the whole Pavilion.

Li Qing Shan said: "This is my Eagle Wolf Guard business. This should not be a matter that an outsider like you should interrupt in. Those few security guards were blocking my Guard from handling our cases. Their deaths do not deserve pity. That old hag also directly attacked me, many people here witnessed it. Big brother Zhuo personally taught me what I should do in these situations, and I simply followed his teachings. "

Zhuo Zhi Bo squeezed out a sentence while baring his teeth: "Landlord Zhao, this is a trivial matter. You should leave it as it is." He has to endure, until he is able to identify the background of Li Qing Shan. One can only imagine, once he knows that Li Qing Shan and Gu Yan Ying have nothing between them, what kind of outburst will occur.

How could Li Qing Shan waste this golden opportunity? Of course he has to prank him while he can, taking advantage of him as much as possible.

Zhou Wen Bin then told Li Qingshan: "Firstly, release this woman!"

Li Qing Shan replied: "My lord, we cannot release here. This is

our evidence. Also, this lowly one has something to complain about, and wishes to sue the Pavilion!"

Zhao Liang Qing had blue veins popping up on his forehead. Zhou Wenbin almost laughed out loud. You have already killed and caused chaos in the Pavilion and even the madam has been ridded off by you, yet you still have grievances you wish to use to sue the Pavilion!"

Lightly coughing twice, he suppressed his smile: "You want to sue the Pavilion on what account?"

Li Qing Shan lifted the hands of Fu Rong, "I sue the Pavilion for inferior counterfeit products, scamming prices, lying to the civilians and harming my feelings!"

Zhao Liang Qing had to endure the urge to shout. Li Qing Shan palm emitted a gust of True Qi, causing Fu Rong to immediately faint. Upon losing consciousness, she could no longer cast her seduction techniques. Even ordinary people could see her true face. Li Qing Shan then lifted her up high.

"Everyone, please have a look, this is what the Queen Fu Rong looks like. Ask your own conscience and see if what I scolded just now was appropriate."

Almost everyone spontaneously rubbed their eyes, and became dumbfounded. Their hopes and dreams crushed. Was this really Fu Rong? Who was the woman in their dreams? What was the point of going bankrupt just to see get a glimpse of her? They questioned their own conscience and found themselves to be really stupid.

Many people immediately vomited. The gap in mental expectations was so strong that it was worse than eating a hundred flies. The dirty vomit flowed on the glamorous flooring of the Pavilion, as if this was its original appearance.

Some people could not believe it, possibly due to being infected by the seductive poison for too long, falling to their knees, crying:

"This is impossible. This is not Fu Rong, this must be a fake! This must all be a conspiracy!"

Zhao Liang Qing was infuriated. He moved forward, exerting True Qi pressure causing the floor boards to crash. However, two more powerful atmospheres instantly locked onto him, one belonging to Zhuo Jibo, another belonging to Zhou Wenbin, two Qi Refining Practitioners.

No matter the reason or the purpose, they cannot just watch Zhao Liang Qing take action on Li Qing Shan. The two of them are symbols of the rules and discipline of Jia Ping City. They were also representatives of the authority of the court. Such rules and authority must not be threatened or disregarded. Li Qing Shan seemed arrogant and domineering, but he was actually acting steadily and with reason.

Li Qing Shan simply did not look at Zhao Liang Qing and only loudly said: "Spent a great price, just to see this clown in action. Wouldn't you say that I am suffering from great injustice?" Then, he readily threw Fu Rong to Zhao Liang Qing: " You do not need to beg from me. Even if you gave them to me, I would not want these goods!"

After Fu Rong's transformation, the looks from the surroundings changed. She instinctively casted her seduction techniques, but after suffering from great mental impact, unless the crowd had very weak wills, they would not be so easily seduced.

She cried hysterically: "What's wrong with all of you? Don't you all love me? I am Fu Rong!" She was seized by Zhao Liang Qing when he then ordered his subordinates: "Take her to her room."

Of course, with the passing of time, the memories of many would gradually diminish. Her seduction technique may regain the high ground, but who knows how long this would take. This mental technique works on more than just the practitioner itself. It also relies on the environment, requiring the influence of sound and

smell, as well as the power of word of mouth. Once everyone thinks you are an absolute beauty, you would become an absolute beauty, resulting in a greater result with half the work done.

Lee Qing Shan's move was equal to letting the flower Fu Rong as well as the Pavilion's years of delicate management become obliterated. It was no wonder that Zhao Liang Qing was so dismembered.

Zhou Wen Bin smiled, stroking his long beard: "This matter concerns one's willingness to fight as well as one's willingness to endure. This official cannot judge this easily." If he should adhere to Li Qing Shan's words, then half the men in Jia Ping City would most likely begin to sue for their own respective grievances.

And facing Chen Xiu, he said: "This miss, please go with me to court. There will be a result for your case tomorrow!" There was already a runner heading overnight to the fishing village to investigate. Although there may be no results, but there should at least be an attempt to find out the truth.

Finally, he turned to Li Qing Shan and said: "You also have involvements with the case. You have to go to the county office tomorrow." There was obviously something he wanted to convey to Qing Shan, but in front of everyone, it was inconvenient to say.

Li Qing Shan said: "This one should be able to attend."

Chen Xiu bowed to thank him, but Li Qingshan said: "No need for thanks. I should be the one to say thank you." This caused Chen Xiu to widen her eyes in puzzlement, not knowing what he meant. However, to be able to get out of suffering was simply too great. Lord Zhou seemed to be as the rumours made him out to be, a great official. She was determined to reveal the dark dealings of the Pavilion, and rescue her fellow suffering sisters.

Zhou Wen Bin took his guards with him as well as Chen Xiu. Zhuo Zhi Bo also took the crowd of Eagle Wolf Guards away. Li Qing Shan followed behind them eagerly, and did not forget to say:



"Thank you Commander Zhuo for taking action for this subordinate!"

The guests also dispersed. Many people distraught, or grieving, vowing never to return.

But such is life, when some people are not happy, some people would be happy. In Jia Ping City, many of the complaining housewives were surprised to find that their own men actually came back, no longer indulging in the prostitution. They were actually grateful to Li Qing Shan for smashing the Pavilion's reputation. Men also found out that compared with Fu Rong, their own wives and concubines were actually first-class beauties. Thus, this incident resulted in much more harmonious couple relationships.

Li Qingshan mood was not bad. On the contrary, Zhao Liang Qing looked at the deserted Pavilion and roared in his heart: "I will make sure you suffer a fate worse than death."

Coincidentally, Li Qing Shan was thinking the same thing. If he could not eradicate this evil when meeting it, then their conflict would not end here. Even if you hate me, I also never forgot about you!

However, he could not reveal his original demon form to kill this Zhao Liang Qing, who had just formed a great enmity with him. If he died on the next day, it would only arouse suspicion from others. He would still like to leave this "valuable opportunity" to Zhuo Zhi Bo.

Hidden cards can only display their greatest power when hidden in the dark. Until he could not help it, he did not want to easily employ these measures. For now, it was more important to strengthen himself. As of now, he could fight even a 4th Level Qi Practitioner, and he believed that if he broke through to the second level, then he could fight this battle under public eyes.

Along the way, Zhuo Zhi Bo and the remaining guards were

silent. their stares at Li Qing Shan becoming more and more antagonistic.

Li Qing Shan was also happy that his ears could remain clean(basically he's saying that they talk nothing but bullshit). He returned back to the small building, and facing Little An, he said: "Thanks for your reminder. If not I might have fallen for their plot. How did you know I fell for the seduction?"

Little An used his finger tips to write on Li Qing Shan's hands.

Turns out that he relied on his pair of Fiery Eyes to see beyond the thin illusions and saw Fu Rong's true looks. For the Dao of the Beautiful Bones, its essence lied in breaking past all illusions and obstacles, to enable the heart to become like a Buddhist Bone Relic, to not be deceived by illusions. Disregarding that weak seduction technique, even the highest grade of illusions would not be able to evade his eyes.

The Dao of Beautiful Bones is far beyond the power of the Pavilion, and is far above most of the Cultivation techniques in this world. The remaining few techniques cannot be considered alongside it, but can only be said to be not too far off.

Li Qing Shan stayed in the storage for a whole afternoon, not just to see those secret martial arts techniques, but also for a rough understanding of the cultivation techniques of this world. These types of information books were commonly found on the first floor and did not require him to go to the second floor.

For the prim and proper Qi Practitioners from large traditional families, these things can only be considered common sense. But for him, this was like opening a door to a whole new world. Every increase in understanding was enlightening for him.

# Chapter 126

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First of all, cultivation techniques do not have grades as specific as that of spiritual talismans and items. However, its grading system is more easily defined than that of spiritual goods. The level of cultivation one can reach with this technique decides the grade of the technique.

For example, even if Li Qing Shan practises the “Xian Tian Qi Refining Technique” to the 9th realm, he would only be a 3rd level Qi Refining warrior. This goes to show that the technique is not very refined and can be considered as a weak entry level cultivation technique. He would need to search for a new technique to cultivate with if he wished to further progress.

There are many more cultivation techniques that can help the cultivator reach the 9th Qi Refining stage, even to experience a Heavenly Tribulation to reach the legendary Foundation Establishment stage. As to whether there are stronger techniques out there, the book he read only ambiguously discussed about it, only stating that there definitely would be, but was unable to list any of them out, clearly showing the author’s lack of knowledge in this department.

But it was true. “Beautiful Bone Dao” is one such technique. When the highest level was achieved, one could attain the status of Buddha, as mentioned by the Green Bull to Qing Shan from the start.

The so-called Bodhisattva, that is to have the heart of Bodhicitta and swear to achieve four wishes. To have a heart to pacify and convert the lives of everyone. To cut off the troubles and materialistic ties to the world. To have the willingness to learn the way of the Buddhist and finally to achieve the promises of the Buddhist teachings, and thus materialising the Buddhist fruition.

This was the saying in the sutras, which Little An read about on

the boat and wrote word by word on Li Qing Shan's palm. However, the Dao of Beautiful Bones also had four different goals.

Endless extermination of the living ; endless pain and trouble ; endless destruction of Buddhist beliefs and institutions ; endless severing of the Buddhist Dao promises.

Although he was expressionless, Qing Shan could clearly feel his extreme seriousness when Little An wrote these two opposing desires onto his palm.

Needless to say, these two opposing wishes were things that Li Qing Shan did not quite understand. Obviously, he would not admit that he was an illiterate, but he felt that that that Buddhist Practitioner must have experienced a great stimulation to have had such a huge change in mentality.

After thinking about it, Li Qing Shan obtained his own direct "understanding", that the guy was probably quite awesome. As to how awesome he was, he did not know. This world most probably had no one that understood how awesome he was.

Even here, where there existed plenty of practitioners that could shift the mountains and calm the seas, Buddha still quietly sits on top of his Lotus Seat, looking at life with either a kind or distant gaze.

Practitioners only dare to call themselves practitioners and not immortals or buddhas. That is not something that exists in the world, perhaps only when reaching above the Nine Heavens that the Green Bull mentioned would one be able to see them. As to Li Qing Shan's thoughts on them, they were merely stronger practitioners, who one could not even fathom their power.

Thus, the conclusion was simple. A technique that could allow one to cultivate till they became a buddha did not need a grade to be termed with. If this news were leaked, then it would not be as simple as exterminating demons, but would incite a chaotic battle to ensue in the Nine Provinces.

Little An practising the "Beautiful Bones Dao" could be said to have an overwhelming absolute superiority over other practitioners of the same cultivation level. Furthermore, Little An only just started to cultivate over these past few months and could only be considered to be a beginner, not even reaching the first level yet. As his cultivation grows, this superiority would grow stronger and completely show its true power.

These were all but thoughts running through Li Qing Shan's mind. At these moments, Little An would just quietly stare at the side of his face and feel satisfied. He did not think so deeply. He just wanted to stay by his side, that's all. Looking to grow a body of flesh and blood was only so that he could publicly stay by his side. Becoming stronger was only to become his aid, rather than a burden.

With his genius intellect, he was able to understand more of the Dao of the Beautiful Bones, the terror of which he greatly felt. He could clearly feel that the Buddhist Practitioner must have experienced something so utterly despairing, for him to create such a technique. For him to so unreluctantly throw himself into the depths of hell, with a corresponding Lotus Seat of white bones, feasting on flesh and blood. To feel happiness from despair, and as such creating his own Elysium.

For his purpose, even if Little An had to kill the masses, bring upon material troubles for himself, destroy temples and ruin the way of the Buddha, he would not find it troublesome.

Li Qing Shan took out a colourful Treasure Pouch and laughed: "Can you see what this is?"

The treasure pouch was from the madam's body. How could he forge to loot the corpse once he killed her? Conducting heroic duties and stealing from the rich to gift the poor were intricately linked. As such, he robbed the madam of her wealth to replenish himself. Unfortunately, that Fu Rong did not carry a Treasure Pouch, if not he would have another in his hands. But as a person,

one should never be too greedy.

"How? I did what I promised, right!"

The blood flames in Little An's eyes flickered cheerfully.

Li Qing Shan said: "Let's take a look at our harvest this time." Inserting his spiritual Qi into the Treasure Pouch, a whole new space was opened before his very eyes, the size of which was comparable to his body.

There were many things inside, but the things like make-up, handkerchiefs and other miscellaneous items were thrown away by him. What he wanted to see were only pills, spiritual talismans, cultivation techniques and anything else related to cultivation.

However, there were no spiritual items in the Treasure Pouch. It seemed that the madam did not participate in any battles after handling social escorts for so many years and hence did not have any prepared.

There were a few bottles of pills, but two of them were aphrodisiac in nature, named "Spring Inducing Pills". After Li Qing Shan took a whiff, he felt that there was a fire going up within his abdomen region. He was unaware of the ingredients used to concoct such pills, which were surprisingly able to have such a strong effect even against practitioners.

The other two bottles were of the opposite nature, named "Calming Heart Pills". With a gentle whiff, his thoughts became clearer but the fire in his abdomen did not subside. It was truly a weird situation where he was aroused like wildfire, yet had a heart still as water.

As for cultivation techniques, there was a book called "Little Techniques". Li Qing Shan browsed through it once and discovered that it would allow one's cultivation to reach the 6th level of Qi Refining to cut open his Qi Sea upon fully practising the technique. In comparison to the "Xian Tian Qi Refining

Technique”, it was much stronger. However, it was unfortunately a book for dual cultivation and required man and woman to cultivate this in the midst of pleasure, treating the other as a cultivation furnace. The “Spring Inducing Pills” and the “Calming Heart Pills” were meant to be used during such cultivation. By letting the cultivation furnace consume the “Spring Inducing Pills”, then one could wantonly extract the Ying Yang Qi from it, while consuming the “Calming Heart Pill” would allow one to manage and soothe the balance of Ying Yang to cultivate this “Little Techniques”.

(Basically, one side will end up sacrificing/losing their cultivation through consuming the “Spring Inducing Pills”)

It was no wonder that the Pavilion was opened so publicly. This was the only way they could publicly search for cultivation furnaces. Earning money was only a secondary task for them. Refining Qi was their main job. If not, being an organisation that simply abducted women for prostitution would have long gotten them exterminated by the Eagle Wolf Guard.

With such a troublesome cultivation process, Li Qing Shan would obviously not practise it. Although the “Xian Tian Refining Qi Technique” was slightly lower in grade, but it was simple to cultivate it and was the ideal technique to build up one’s foundations. Unless one was a miraculously gifted talent, one’s foundation usually started off with this technique.

Putting all these aside, Qing Shan finally found two bottles of Condensing Qi Pills. It seemed that no matter what sect one belonged to, these basic pills were things one could not lack. Although her possession was at least that of over ten pills, it was enough to be proud of. Thus, the number of Qi Condensing Pills Qing Shan possessed reached over seventy over pills and he could be considered to be rather wealthy.

Other things that Li Qing Shan paid more attention to were a stack of accounting books. He looked through them until his mind

was fogged up and decided to hand them over to Zhou Wen Bin the next day.

Lastly, there was money, lots and lots of money. Li Qing Shan had never seen so much money in his life. In total, there were at least several hundred thousand worth of silver. Although each note was worth at least a thousand, there were thick stacks all over the place. Even though the Pavilion earned money on the side, they were as cruel as robbers when it came down to earning money. And since there was no place safer than that of one's Treasure Pouch, Li Qing Shan heavily benefited from their income.

If it were the old Qing Shan that acquired so much money, he would be ecstatic to the point of going crazy. How much meat could he buy? How much Ginseng could he acquire? Now, he was dressed prim and properly and feasted on only top cuisines, and had more pills than Ginsengs. However, there was no place for him to spend money anymore.

However, if he really wanted to cultivate the "Little Techniques", the several hundred thousand worth of silver would be enough to purchase a few "sisters". He entertained these dirty thoughts in his head for a while before keeping the silver and Qi Condensing Pills into his Treasure Pouch.

Passing that colourful Treasure Pouch to Little An, he said: "If I promised it, it will be done. This is yours."

Little An then put the wooden plate into the new Treasure Pouch, and returned the old Treasure Pouch to Li Qing Shan. Little An played with the things inside happily, and seemed more like a child than ever.

As Li Qing Shan looked at him, he smiled slightly and felt his bundled up nerves slowly easing up. He slowly started to feel a sense of peace that he could only get from being home. No matter what, he was not alone.

A Qi Condensing Pill was thrown into the air and dropped into Li



Qing Shan's mouth before he started to sit down to meditate.

At this moment, Zhuo Zhi Bo was fuming. "Li Qing Shan! How dare you play around with this old man." Ge Jian and Qian Rong Zheng both kept quiet at the side and did not dare to reply.

"Commander, should we go all the way?" An Eagle Wolf Guard made a "kill" gesture and the surrounding guards all revealed cruel expressions. They were all Zhuo Zhi Bo's confidantes and this had to advise and help their master. In their view, Li Qing Shan could only be so powerful with his Body Refining Technique. If he got surrounded by five 3rd and 4th Level Qi Refining Practitioners, he could only die.

"If I could kill him, I would personally kill him!" Zhuo Zhi Bo suppressed his rage, "I've already asked the people in the Clear River Magistrate to investigate. Not long after will there be a result. Only after then shall we discuss about this again. Now, all of you are not to get in touch with him. Ge Jian, you are not to see him anymore. I will send others to go near him. Rong Zheng, you are a new guard member, just like him. When you guys are able to spend sufficient time together, you need to find out whether his background is authentic or not."

Ge Jian sighed in relief. Qian Rong Zheng however slightly paled. She was venomous in means and thoughts but she was thoroughly shocked by the cruel and decisive means of Li Qing Shan.

Ge Jian also worriedly mentioned: "If you really want to take action, Zhou Wen Bin seems to value this kid, as well as the vice leader..."

Zhuo Zhi Bo replied: "If I really wanted to take action, then this Jia Ping City has no one that can protect him."

Li Qing Shan did not know of these hidden conspiracies. Even if he did know he would not mind. He was eating Qi Condensing Pills like candy, to increase his own strength. Only when one's fist was strong enough could he get rid of assholes like Zhao Liang Qing

and Zhuo Zhi Bo.

In a short 15 minutes, he had already consumed 3 Qi Condensing Pills, which dissolved to form True Qi and Demonic Qi. Although he could rely on the “Spiritual Turtle Calms the Seas Scripture” to ensure that his mental state never tires, but his digestion of the Condensing Qi Pills was not much more superior than that of his peer Refining Qi Practitioners.

# Chapter 127

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As the Qi Condensation pill entered his body, half of its medicinal power was directly converted into Demonic Qi by his Demon Core. The remaining half of it was then processed by the Purification Ring. What was finally left behind for him was not even a tenth of its prowess. This was equivalent to him consuming 10 pills just to match others eating one pill and was why he could consume so many pills so rapidly.

If regular Qi Condensation Practitioners were willing to, they could also consume one pill every 3 days, even eating up to one a day. However, the medicinal powers inside would be greatly wasted and be unable to be converted to True Qi in the body, which would eventually harm the body if left within it for a long period of time.

Li Qing Shan was not being wasteful, and neither was he afraid of there being any harm. He suddenly thought to himself, was he being too selfish with his Demon Core?

In the beginning, Refining Qi was too difficult, thus he had to suppress his Demon Core to allow his Qi refinement to speed up. However, now that there were so many Qi Condensing Pills, he could consider changing his mindset on cultivation.

His foundation ultimately relied on his Demonic path, and were based heavily on the 3 types of abilities. After knowing that the “Nine Oxen and Two Tiger Strength” was not the real technique that the Green Bull was planning on teaching him, he automatically distinguished his prowess in the “Great Ox Demon Fist” and “Tiger Demon Bone Refining Fist” for his cultivation.

This was the path that the Green Bull laid out for him, one that would lead beyond the Nine Heavens. If he fully focussed all his heart on Qi Refining matters, wouldn't he be giving up on his long term goals for short term gains? His reason for returning to the

civilisation was after all to acquire resources that could not be found in the wild.

Now, with the resource in his hands, which was the Condensing Qi Pills, it was time to return back to his original track of thought.

Once he clarified his thoughts on this matter, his heart trembled and he immediately grabbed Little An and left during the night. In the midst of the trees, he flew like the birds as he exited the radius of the Eagle Wolf Guard area. He came to the other side of the mountain peak, which was unseen by Jia Ping City and had cliffs a hundred Zhang in height. All that could be seen below was the rumbling churning clear river waters.

When he first came to Jia Ping City, he saw that this cliff blocked the river flow. The currents in here were turbulent and over the span of a long time, it dug out a deep cave underneath the cave which was suitable for training.

Li Qing Shan jumped off the cliff and entered the clear river water, causing splashes of several Zhang in height. The surrounding black water swallowed his body, while a small ripple appeared beside him as Little An jumped down beside him.

He swam in the water for a while before finally finding a water cave in extreme depths of the river. Pitch dark and akin to a large beast opening its mouth, the cave did not scare him, instead, it surprised him greatly, causing him to dive down deeper to the very depths of the cave.

He took a deep breath, released his Demonic energy and revealed his original appearance.

Crimson red eyes, skin as dark as steel, fangs as sharp as knives were all displaying their characteristics in the depths of the water.

In a sense, this was the real Li Qing Shan.

With his two Zhang(3.3 metres equivalent) and two feet tall body, the river water was forcibly split but yet did not stir any

subcurrents. The water flowed around the sides of his body and had a sticky texture to it. The depths of the water made it great for hiding and concealing Demonic Qi. He was merely controlling the surrounding currents, working on enhancing this effect as much as he could.

Little An then took up a silent posture at a side, ensuring that Li Qing Shan would be able to cultivate in greater safety.

Although the Demonic Qi was overwhelmingly advantageous, but that strand of pure and extreme True Qi was akin to a stream in the midst of the surging Yellow River. Although weak and small, it would never cease, and neither would it be consumed and converted by the Demonic Qi.

Li Qing Shan waved his hand, causing the water to split to two sides. He then conjured up all the Qi Condensation Pills he had and after a thought, left behind 10 pills for his daily cultivation.

Then he grabbed the remaining 60 over pills and threw them all inside his big mouth which he swallowed.

Not cultivating the “Xian Tian Qi Refining Technique”, but the “Great Ox Demon Fist”.

Under the deep dark water, his crimson hair Coreced, stomping his hooves, rearing his horns, flexing his skin. Each and every one of his actions were clearly practises that he was familiar with. This was the Technique that started off his cultivation path, and everything was clearly extremely familiar to him.

As the Qi Condensation Pills entered his body, they were like tens of mines exploding in the water. The surging Demonic Qi that was akin to the Yellow River began to circulate at over ten times its original aped, screaming and shouting as if it were going to rip his body to shreds.

Although Qi Condensation Pills were the most peaceful and suitable pills for cultivation, consuming so many at once would be

destructive for most ordinary Qi Refining Practitioners. However, at this moment, he was not a Qi Refining Practitioner, but a demon, a demon with a Demonic Core.

“SUPPRESS!” Li Qing Shan shouted in a low voice, akin to an explosion in the bottom of the water body.

With the Demonic Core’s suppression, there was a vague holographic image of a Spiritual Turtle that appeared around the Core. It raised its head and let out a noiseless roar as its 4 pillar-like limbs stepped on the rampaging Demonic Qi.

The Demonic Qi that almost lost control instantaneously calmed down and the demonic Qi became much easier to control. At Li Qing Shan’s guidance, the flow of Demonic Qi was integrated to every part of his body.

With the medicinal powers being converted by the “Spiritual Turtle Suppresses the Seas Scripture” into Demonic Qi, which was in turn being converted to much stronger power by the “Great Ox Demon Fist”. His heart was in a state of joy. Yes. This was where he foundations truly lay at.

He did not stop his movements as his body made noises akin to the sounds of steel bars being ripped apart. His steel like muscles were as if they were being blown up with air, expanding and intersecting while sounding off a series of “peng peng” noises.

His body grew bigger bit by bit!

Two Zhang three feet! Two Zhang four feet! Two Zhang five feet!

In a moment, his size expanded by three feet, a strong force grew in his body. As he swung his fist casually, the water was compressed and seemed like a cannonball as it blasted out a hole in the muddy flooring at the bottom of the water.

Although he was not able to cultivate to the second level of the “Great Ox Demon Fist”, but his strength had a visible increase. Obviously, the “Great Ox Demon Fist” lived up to its name, where

the two Oxen worth of strength was not that of normal Oxen, but rather the strength of two Demon Oxen.

As his body changed, his heart slowly changed, losing some of the cautiousness of his humanity while gaining the rampaging confidence of a demon.

With such strength, who could kill him! Even if he met Zhuo Zhi Bo, he could win him in a match, let alone a Zhao Liang Qing. Why not take advantage of the night to return to the pavilion to kill him and grab more medicinal pills to cultivate with!

Li Qing Shan then circulated the “Spiritual Turtle Suppresses the Seas Scripture” before turning back to his human form, regaining composure after his rampage. However, the thought lingered on in his head as he seriously considered the pros and cons from his actions.

His greatest concern was being exposed for being a demon. However, he was also aware of the difference between the 6th Level of Qi Refining and the 5th Level of Qi Refining. As for his demonic form, it was at least equal to that of a 6th Level Qi Refiner or even 7th Level Qi Refiner in terms of strength. As long as he grasped the opportunity, he could even possibly kill him in a single blow without getting anyone’s attention.

AS long as he cleaned up well, it could even let others think that this person fled to escape. Although he might be suspected at the end of matters but his surface level strength was clearly that of a 1st Level Qi Refiner. Who could imagine him killing a 5th Level Qi Refiner?

The more he thought about it, the more he thought it was worth a bet. If he had such secret cards that he never used, it would be such a waste. Also, if those that saw his secrets died, then his secret cards would remain secret cards!

Li Qing Shan revealed to Little An of his plans, to which Little An would naturally not reject. Afterwards, the two of them began to

discuss in the depths of the water how they would assassinate a 5th Level Qi Refining Practitioner, Zhao Liang Qing.

This was both to remove an enemy as well as to obtain more resources, such that Qing Shan could cultivate the “Great Demon Ox Fist” to the second level earlier.

Li Qing Shan swam out of the cave and followed the clear river water downwards to go to Jia Ping City. From an empty corner, he sneaked up ashore, without a single drop of water on him as he sneaked into the dark alleys quickly.

Sneaking through the maze-like alleys, the 7 floor tall building gave him the most obvious navigation reference point.

The moonlight that night was bright, and he walked amongst the shadows and darkness, concealing all of his presence, whether it was his Demonic Qi or his True Qi. He was like a tiger walking in the forest, letting out no sound under his feet.

When he walked past a fellow pedestrian, that man did not even notice his existence. He only felt a gust of wind by his side and in this humid summer night, it brought a close shiver to his bones. The man sneezed, unable to distinguish that it was the smell of murderous intent.

Li Qing Shan stood at the alley behind the pavilion. Outside the two Zhang tall wall was the pavilion's rear courtyard, where the guards were patrolling the vicinity. Unlike a brothel, the place seemed more like a castle.

This naturally did not stop Li Qing Shan. The so-called martial artists were no longer within his sights as he flipped over the high wall and hid in a dense garden within the courtyard. Raising his head slightly, his nose slowly sucked in a large volume of air, collecting various information from the smells in the air.

He did not have a clear memory of Zhao Liang Qing's smell, but as for the scent of Fu Rong, he had a very clear impression. That



was a special sort of seductive incense.

In order to strengthen his sense of smell, he released a strand of Demonic Qi. As the black colour covered his entire body, his hair grew crimson and his forehead grew two horns. His body increased in size and became a black iron tower like muscle man.

However, before waiting for even greater changes, he found who he wanted. Not eager to revert back to his human form, he headed to the pavilion. Tonight's bad business in the pavilion brought him loads of benefits. (He chased them all away and now he's going for the big boss. Talk about bad customers)

However, he quickly realised that the scent of Fu Rong did not come from above but rather below. He went down the basement to discover hundreds of vats of wine, but no sight of Fu Rong. Her smell indicated she was even further below. The pavilion hid a deeper court underneath this basement, which explained why the kidnapped girls were not found when the investigation took place earlier that day.

At last, it was under Little An's keen inspection that they found a vat of wine stuck to the floor which was the mechanism to open the door. However, Qing Shan was aware that this was not a matter of being detailed and focussed but rather having a strong understanding of the infrastructure which allowed him to grasp the critical points in the building.

Turning the vats, the wall revealed a door to a passage. As the two entered, the wall closed behind them. In front of them lied an eerie staircase that led downwards which Qing Shan walked down unhesitatingly.

Moaning noises overlapped as two bodies vigorously collided. Zhao Liang Qing angrily exclaimed : "I must kill him!" Fu Rong could only randomly and confusedly respond.

The two of them were not using the Heart Suppressing Pill to dual cultivate but rather were using this primitive method to vent

the anger in their hearts.

Zhao Liang Qing released a large gush, before looking away from Fu Rong in disgust. If not for the need to cultivate daily, he would never be willing to engage in such “happy times” with this woman. He ordered: “Bring over those girls!”

# Chapter 128

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Here's the Red Packet for all my readers! Wishing you all a great year ahead! Happy Chinese New Year!!!

Fu Rong asked in shock : "You wish to...?"

Zhao Liang Qing said: "I want to use them. From today on, these people will no longer appear."

Use! What an extremely cold way to describe his treatment of them. As if he were treating them like objects. Yet, the reality was even more cruel, for he did not only treat them as objects but also as consumables.

“Doesn’t the sect rules disapprove of such craft?” Fu Rong’s body trembled. She knew that what he wanted to use was one of the sect’s most cruel techniques where he would suck the young girls dry of their origin Ying Qi. This was akin to killing the chicken to acquiring the eggs, which was inadvertently the way of the demons. Thus, it was forbidden by the sect and if one was discovered to be doing so, then they would be the enemy of all below the heavens and be left with nothing a road to extermination.

Dual cultivation sects. Ever since ancient times, they were always a prim and proper branch of the Daoist Family. The “Little Tactics” was not some evil cultivation technique as well. However, to cultivate such a path, one needed to have greater determination than when cultivating that of other techniques. Or else, one might end up being consumed by their lust and sink to the path of the demons, which would lead to their cultivation becoming that of a demon’s.

Zhao Liang Qing said: "Without this approach, how would I quickly breakthrough? If you don’t reveal it and neither do I, who would know? Do you not hate that kid? Wait for me to clear my meridian paths and break through to the 6th Level of Qi Refining,

then I can completely manipulate my equipment and kill him with a flying sword! This can be considered as taking revenge for you!”

Upon mentioning Li Qing Shan, Fu Rong steeled her heart and walked out the door without any clothes. Zhao Liang Qing remained lying on the bed and closed his eyes in an attempt to rest his spirits.

Fu Rong only just walked out the door when a big hand with sharp claws strangled her neck, letting out a crisp noise, before she fell to the ground. The Refining Corpse Blood Fire then crept up quietly and took only an instant to completely engulf her, leaving nothing but a skeleton behind.

Fu Rong’s presence instantly vanished!

Zhao Liang Qing opened his eyes and shouted out: “Who’s there!?” His voice then echoed in the court.

Zhao Liang Qing became extremely vigilant, but then saw Li Qing Shan push the door to enter, a smirk on his young face. “It was me!” He had already recovered his human form and his aura was that of a 1st Level Qi Refining Practitioner, exactly the same as it was before when he caused such a commotion in the pavilion earlier that day.

When enemies met, their eyes easily reddened. Zhao Liang Qing glared red-eyed at Li Qing Shan and shouted: “You killed her?”

“Yes, I killed her. Apologies for ruining your good business, I’ll make a move first.” Li Qing Shan replied as he suddenly exited the room.

“You still wish to escape?!” Zhao Liang Qing bounced from the bed and pounced towards the door. He even refused to take the his treasure pouch at his side. His hatred for Li Qing Shan was now at an extreme and he wanted to eradicate him as soon as possible. A mere 1st Level Qi Refining Practitioner would never be a match for him. Even bare-handed, he could easily kill Qing Shan.

It truly was the situation where one saw the path to heaven yet ignored it and rushed into hell even when one could not distinguish a gate for it.

Zhao Liang Qing just rushed out the door when he suddenly turned his head to see a skeleton constructed of bloodied flames rush to bite him from his left side. There was no sense of heat, yet he instinctively felt that the blood flames were terrifying.

Recklessly releasing his True Qi, a strong gust of wind stirred in the dark corridors. Zhao Liang Qing then raised his right fist and condensed a hand seal of True Qi, crushing the blood flame skeleton with a single strike. As he was about to continue his assault on his assailant, he suddenly stood still, as if he were nailed in place.

A murderous killing Demonic Qi, ten times more terrifying than the Skeleton, surged out like great waves from behind him. He felt that if he moved even a little, he would be swallowed and ripped to shreds by the beast behind him. He leaked out cold sweat from his back at the very thought.

What could be behind him?

He was gripped by a tremendous fear he had never felt before, but he growled in his heart. He felt so grieved. He was a Qi Refining Expert, with a jaded future. As long as he broke through the 6th Level of Qi Refining, the pavilion would have a great position waiting for him. He regretted. He regretted over why he did not slow down even a little, to pick up his treasure pouch, resulting in him having to face this horror with nothing but his naked body.

He slowly turned around and finally came face to face with the true face of the horror.

As if cast out of iron, that huge body was barely able to fit in the narrow corridor. It could only squat in the darkness. Yet, it was darker than dark, with crimson hair flowing behind it, as if it were

a burning flame. However, it was also like a flowing blood river. A pair of bronze bell like crimson eyes stunned him, causing him to be unable to move.

He was dead!

This idea, for the very first time in his life, was ever so clearly imprinted into Zhao Liang Qing's mind. However, his thirst to live encouraged his rebellious will as he turned around in the fastest speed he ever could in his life and used every strand of True Qi to strike this horrifying monster.

He did not really want to fight the monster to the death. Instead, he intended on using his True Qi strike to create a rebounding force for himself to escape to the other end of the tunnel. Although the skeleton was creepy, he still believed that he could manage it. As for the monster ahead of him, with its enormous size, it would not be able to move easily in the tunnel which would allow him to escape from the hidden door in the tunnel and get away.

There was still an opportunity! There was still hope!

Zhao Liang Qing's movements suddenly stopped, before he began to spit out blood and pieces of his internal organs. He looked down unbelievably. A huge claw had grabbed him and had done so in a speed that he could not react against, before raising him above "his" eye-level.

It was like a cat who had just learned to hunt which was studying the first rat he had caught.

The pain almost completely halted his thought processes. How could he meet such an incident? Wasn't he merely chasing a 1st Level Qi Refining Practitioner? How did he meet such a monster?

As he thought further, he coughed out in difficulty: "You, you are ... .. Li Qing Shan?"

"It is I!" The voice was like metal whirring around or akin to the flow of lava under the volcano before it erupted. He announced the

truth with a low voice, the truth that Zhao Liang Qing found difficult to believe.

Li Qing Shan was really surprised. Because he was too weak! Zhao Liang Qing was simply too weak! The strong sense of suppression he felt coming from Zhao Liang Qing when he was in his human form disappeared. Now, with just a little bit more force, he could squish this 5th Level Qi Refining Practitioner like a bug.

It seems that I have always not had much confidence in myself? Li Qing Shan mused in his thoughts.

"Please...Forgive me!" Zhao Liang Qing said in difficulty as more blood flowed out from his mouth.

"Dream on!" Li Qing Shan used a bit more strength in his arms, and with a "peng" noise, a blood mist exploded in his palms and meat was squished into paste.

The Refining Corpse Blood Fire rushed up, converting every drop of blood into a part of it, perfectly cleaning up the crime scene that Li Qing Shan created.

Li Qing Shan reverted to his human form, stood up to stretch his muscles and said: "And to think that I took you to be such a big deal originally. Looks like you weren't much in the end."

Little An then pointed out his finger and the crushed bones scattered across the floor suddenly trembled before flying back into his Treasure Pouch, finishing up the crime scene clean up.

As if he were walking into his own home, Li Qing Shan ambled into the centre of the luxurious bedroom, or rather, "cultivation" room. He stuffed two Treasure Pouches from the head of the bed into his arms and then studied the ten over large erotic portraits before making an evaluation: "The drawing really sucks!"

Little An kept Zhao Liang Qing and Fu Rong's clothes and deliberated for a while before deciding to not keep the bedsheets. Being detailed enough to remove many small pieces of evidence to

make the scene look more like the two of them escaped secretly rather than being killed.

These matters were not things that Li Qing Shan could do and after confirming that there was nothing else to appreciate in the area, he asked: "Is it alright now?"

Little An nodded and the two of them returned from the route they came by.

As he was going back up the mountains, as it passed 2am, Li Qing Shan used the moonlight to examine the loot he acquired in this adventure.

One hundred and twenty thousand pieces of silver, as well as a pile of gold and silver items which were Fu Rong's years of collection as well as Zhao Liang Qing's earnings from his many years in managing the pavilion.

A few spiritual talismans, none of which were trash grade and were at least of bottom grade. There were even two pieces of mid-grade talismans.

There was also over 50 Qi Condensation Pills which instantly replenished the amount that Li Qing Shan consumed.

A few pebbles which contained pure Spiritual Qi were present as well, which were most likely the legendary Spiritual Stones.

However, this was not the biggest gain this trip. The biggest gain was from Zhao Liang Qing's Treasure Pouch, from which he found a crystal sword, which was about a foot long, had no hilt, was crystal clear, and had light circulating inside it. It was clearly gold, yet it had the properties of jade.

Li Qing Shan held the small sword in his palm and looked at it in detail, feeling that it was very light. However, there was a strong Spiritual Qi flowing inside it, which was greater than that of his Wind Severing Knife, and it was clearly a mid-grade Spiritual Weapon.



But if it did not have a hilt, how could it be used? Li Qing Shan then remembered that Flying Dragon Elder and thought back to Wang Pu Shi's black metal ruler. Could it be that this sword was meant to be manipulated? Without a clear idea, he could only first keep it.

Li Qing Shan felt greatly satisfied in his heart. It seemed that it was always the those taking the path of evil that could earn money quickly. Civilisation was truly a great place. If he stayed in the jungle, where would he get all these pills to eat? His cultivation speed would definitely be much slower.

Although demonic cultivation was slow and generally took hundreds of years, he believed that at his current pace, he could greatly reduce the amount of time it took.

Tonight's battle gave him a lot more confidence. Regardless of the fact that Zhuo Zhi Bo was a 6th Level Qi Refining Practitioner and opened up his own Ocean Qi, Qing Shan believed that he was able to stand his ground against him.

"Zhuo Zhi Bo ah Zhuo Zhi Bo, I wonder what good things your Treasure Pouch will contain?" Li Qing Shan licked his lips, as he smiled maliciously.

It truly fitted the saying, just as man has the heart to harm the tiger, the tiger also has the will to harm man. (Basically, one who plots against another would get plotted against as well)

...

A long time ago, a teenager stepped out of the mountains. An eagle soared in the sky, a wolf rushed in front of them. They were the pets and companions of the youth ever since he was young, helping him catch prey and disperse his loneliness while helping him bide some of the toughest times in his life.

When the youth decided to take up the will of heaven, he took up his treasured sword, while the eagle and wolf transformed into

demons as they followed him to battle throughout the Nine Provinces, aiding him in defeating countless strong foes and overcoming many calamities.

Only until the youth swept across all of the land and set the Cauldrons upon the Nine Provinces, was he called the True Dragon Heavenly Child. The number of officials under him rivalled that of raindrops in the rain. His ferocious generals were as many as the clouds. His rear palace(Harem equivalent) numbered three thousand and he owned everything under the heavens.

But no one, none of his own kind, could possess greater trust from him than what he had in his two most loyal friends, and he made them kings and gave them authority over hundreds of millions of people. Until the dragon returned to the heavens, he ordered them to protect the empire.

This was the origin of the Eagle Wolf Guard.

And yes, this dynasty, was named the Great Xia Dynasty.

## Chapter 129

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When the dawn of the next day came, layers of mist floated around the mountains. Upon opening the window, one could see that the city of Jia Ping was submerged in a sea of fog. There were only a few tall buildings like the pavilion, which were akin to islands in the sea, floating and sinking in this sea of fog itself.

No one really realized what happened last night, besides Li Qing Shan. He looked down on his own right hand. It was a thick hand full of calluses. The mark from many years of hard work did not simply disappear as he cultivated. It was this very hand that crushed his opponent last night. That feeling of causing him to explode still very clearly remained on his palm, engraved into his memory.

If it was an ordinary person, one would probably lament his/her hands being stained with blood, and be sad for a period of time. However, Qing Shan felt fantastic and relieved. It was not that his demonic nature had influenced him to cause his heart to become cruel and emotionless. He could still cry for Little An, as well as wail for Xuan Yue(The cat demon with nine-lives). As for trash like Zhao Liang Qing, he did not even deserve a sigh.

You can choose not to accept the dark side of your heart and pretend that you are still an ordinary human. Or you could calmly accept it, so that you could continue searching for these pieces of trash and enjoy the feeling of crushing them.

Between the two, Li Qing Shan did not hesitate to choose the latter. Using the words that he said in the beginning, why the need to suppress your own interests? There are definitely a lot of people that deserved to be killed in this world.

The first day of joining the Eagle Wolves Guard, until now, was to give the newbies rest and time to familiarise themselves with their new environment. From today onwards would be the real

training for the Eagle Wolf Guard under the leadership of a senior.

Originally, this person would be Ge Jian, but the one who came was the one who used Li Qing Shan as a bet, "Rosacea" (Rosacea is a skin condition, the author chooses to use this guy's condition to nickname him.). He patted the shoulder of Li Qing Shan and laughed: "Boy, last night, you were really amazing, even I do not dare to bully others like such. "

Just by this sentence, Li Qing Shan knew that he probably was not Zhuo Zhi Bo's trusted confidantes. Even if Qing Shan wanted to start gathering confidantes, he would not accept such an improper person.

Diao Fei and Qian Rongzhi sat beside Li Qing Shan, each having their own thoughts, without saying a word.

"Rosacea" cleared his throat and began the first lesson of Eagle Wolf Guard: The history of the Eagle Wolf Guard.

Li Qing Shan gathered his attention and listened, for the first time, he knew exactly where he was and was shocked by the magnificent stories in the midst of the rich history. He murmured: "The Great Xia Dynasty?"

What would a dynasty established by a practitioner be like? Even more surprising, one of the most powerful groups under the rule of the human dynasty was actually commanded by a member of the demon race. This was simply unbelievable!

However, he could understand the feelings of the emperor. His wives would fight for his affection, and his children would fight for the throne. Even loyal officers would clash with him for the sake of their own ideologies and beliefs. The hearts of people were too complicated. Only their(the demons) loyalty was eternal and unchanging.

Although he refused to admit that Little An was his pet, Li Qing Shan found it hard to find other more appropriate titles for him.

He trusted him so much because of his pure mind and his unreserved reliance on himself.

"Rosacea" was like the most prominent storyteller, with his spittle flying all over the air, as he recounted that period of history magnificently. But as he spoke to this point, he suddenly stopped talking and smiled towards Li Qing Shan: "Speaking of the President of our Eagle Wolf Guard, the Great Nation Protector Eagle God, we cannot fail to mention his daughter ... .."

The currently pensive Li Qing Shan suddenly looked up, just to listen to the "Rosacea" slowly say that name, "Gu Yan Ying!"

Li Qing Shan slowly closed his eyes, as if he was once again caught in meditation. That white clothed unrestrained figure once again emerged in his mind. Yan Song did mention upon bringing up Gu Yan Ying that she had a terrifying background. But Li Qing Shan did not expect that it was terrifying to this extent.

"Rosacea" then said: "Of course, this information cannot be spread to outsiders. Although this is the open secret of the Eagle Wolf Guard internal matters, but it is also a taboo topic. The White Wolf Command even specifically ordered that whoever dared to waggle his tongue on these matters then he would see to it that that person's tongue be crushed. You lot better not think that this is just a mere saying. This can be considered to be our Ru Yi Province Eagle Wolf Guard's First Sin. If you guys want to pretend that you did not hear of this the it's fine. Anyways, your generation will probably have no chance to make any connections with such great people." Talking up to this point, he took a look at Li Qing Shan.

Li Qing Shan did not make any response. After a slight shock, he recovered his composure immediately. The goal the Green Ox gave him was simply too far away. This caused his vision to never stay at this simple world.

When your ultimate goal is to fly to the sky, yet others tell you

how tall Mount Everest is, how hard it is to climb, you may agree, but you will not feel too much pressure. You may even feel that this goal is much simpler and easier to achieve.

As for whether he could make any connections, that would depend on fate. But if he could get closer to her then he would definitely do it. He was not afraid of others saying that he was perverted, because he admitted that he loved beautiful woman, great alcohol, tasty food, crushing opponents as well as great medicinal pills and spiritual artifacts.

...

Across the bustling street, Li Qing Shan came up to the Magistrate Court. In front of the door, there was a pair of stone lions. In Li Qing Shan's view, these were not merely to scare off the common folk. These were equipment that emitted authority and from the Spiritual Qi they emitted, even if someone invaded, with these pair of stone lions, they would quickly enliven and rip the enemy apart.

Compared with them, the two guards were more like decorations. Seeing that Li Qing Shan was wearing his uniform, naturally no one dared to stop him. After he reported his name, he was brought in immediately.

The court was in a busy state. Many people of various kinds were moving around under the guidance of the runners. They all seemed to be busy settling their own matters which were not limited to complaining and suing cases.

Zhou Wen Bin met Li Qing Shan in the garden of the Magistrate. Under a patch of bright sunshine, Zhou Wen Bin dressed in green, sitting cross-legged on the mat, under a big willow tree near a pond, appreciating the scenery. He was unlike a governor, and more like a reclusive cultivator, free as he could be, painting a huge contrast with the bustling state of the Magistrate.

Li Qing Shan paid a salute: "My lord seems so stylish!" (Ok in this

he uses a phrase 潇洒, which generally means free and unrestrained. This can also be thought of as stylish in some sense as well. In this context, stylish seemed more appropriate.)

Zhou Wen Bin waved his hand another sitting mat appeared, along with a set of exquisite tea drinking equipment.

Li Qing Shan sat down and saw with a wave of Zhou Wen Bin's hand, the steam from the pond rise and gather into his palms before being converted into a stream of water that flowed into the teapot which then began to steam. A strong smell of tea wafted as the two tea pots filled up.

Zhou Wen Bin then said in a carefree manner: "Us practitioners, should originally not be bogged down by such worldly matters!"

Li Qing Shan then asked curiously: "Then why does my lord stay in this county? Why not search for a more natural spot and cultivate properly?"

"This is something you do not know. This is a cultivation technique of scholars. Gathering the willpower and beliefs of the masses can also be used to cultivate, which is why I am the Lord of Jia Ping City."

Only when Zhou Wen Bin revealed it then did Li Qing Shan know that there was actually such a method. Also, this was an extremely efficient way of cultivating which did not require too much thought into it. Zhou Wen Bin had a bunch of officials under him to take care of the majority of the governmental work. Normally, he just needed to stay at the backyard and drink tea while appreciating the scenery. There were truly numerous paths in the way of cultivation.

Li Qing Shan then turned back to the official business: "I do not know why my lord chooses to summon me, and the purpose of this summoning."

Zhou Wen Bin replied: "You know you're going to die soon?"

Li Qing Shan then said: "This, I have no idea."

Zhou Wen Bin said: "You have deeply offended Zhuo Zhi Bo. He has very little guts, thus, he chooses to endure. But you and I are very clear that you do not have any particular background at all. Old Wang of the Clear River Prefecture doesn't really like you. Zhuo Zhi Bo would know of this sooner or later."

Li Qing Shan's face remained unchanged: "What does my lord wish to reveal to me to answer this situation? Unless you wish for me to convert to become your subordinate?"

Zhou Wen Bin said: "I would like to have such a subordinate such as yourself. What you have done in Qing Yang County, I have heard about it. But for me to hire another official would waste another portion of resources."

Li Qing Shan only just remembered that Ye Da Chuan. Counting the time, they are supposed to arrive around today.

"However, since you entered the Eagle Wolf Guard, you can no longer get away easily."

Li Qing Shan said: "Then I can only run away and hide?"

Zhou Wen Bin shook his head: "Defection from the Eagle Wolf Guard is an even greater sin. It is enough for there to be posters put out for you. With the size of all under the heavens, where can you even run off to? Do you think you can run off to the forests and mountains and coexist with those demons?"

Li Qing Shan wondered, this was not a difficult task.

Zhou Wen Bin said: "Now, if you want to avoid Zhuo Zhi Bo's threat, you only have one place you can go to."

Li Qing Shan asked: "Where?"

"100 School Courtyard!"

"Where is this 100 School Courtyard?"

"Naturally, in the Clear River Prefecture."



"What kind of place is this 100 School Courtyard?"

"It is a place for ordinary people to cultivate. It is also the foundation of the Great Xia Dynasty. As a magistrate, besides being a guardian, I have the responsibility of selecting candidates for the country. I can recommend talented practitioners to the 100 School Courtyard. Even the responsibilities of the Eagle Wolf Guard can be put aside temporarily. Naturally you will no longer need to worry about Zhuo Zhi Bo once you are there. To tell you the truth, I was from the 100 School Courtyard, and to be frank, you will experience greater benefits there as compared to being an Eagle Wolf Guard."

Li Qing Shan said: "I do not know why my lord shows me such preferential treatment?"

Zhou Wen Bin said: "Although your talent is mediocre, but I really like your temperament. I cannot bear to see you destroyed by the hands of a crafty fox. Perhaps in the future when you have to return to the Eagle Wolf Guard, I will not mind you coming over to Jia Ping City and maybe we can even work together."

Some people will dislike your personality, but naturally some people will also like your personality. When receiving malicious intent, you may also receive some good will. This was quite fair.

Li Qing Shan thought for a moment and replied: "Thank you for your kindness. In the future I would definitely go there to take a look. But for now, I won't. I still have things to do in Jia Ping City."

He speculated that the 100 School Courtyard should be similar to a school for practitioners. This would cultivate talents for the Great Xia Dynasty and suppress those who cultivated in sects outside. However, since it is a school, it is inevitable that a tuition fee will be imposed and there would be plenty of inconveniences when taking action. At least, he was unable to go on a killing spree in the name of justice as a student.

He now needs flesh and blood to help Little An condense his

physical body. Also, he needed to acquire more Qi Condensation Pills to cultivate during these missions. These two goals could be achieved simultaneously and were very suitable to accomplish in Jia Ping City. And most importantly, he was not afraid of Zhuo Zhi Bo, not even a single bit.

Zhou Wen Bin frowned: "It seems that you do not understand the strength of 6th Level Qi Refining Practitioners."

# Chapter 130: Equipment Drive Techniques

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Of course, Li Qing Shan understood the strength of the 6th level Qi Refining. For opening the Sea of Qi has been often compared to condensing a Demon Core. He has often understood how much his strength has actually increased ever since he condensed his own Demon Core. It was simply a qualitative change.

However, as for information on the enemy, there was never such a thing as knowing too much. He wanted to also know how humans managed to compete against demons. 5th Level Qi Refining Practitioners such as Zhao Liang Qing, were far too lacklustre. Qing Shan then humbly asked: "Then I humbly request for my lord's advice!"

Zhou Wen Bin said: "The power of mankind lies not in the strength of merely one's body. Or else, no matter in terms of True Qi or body tenacity, we would be unable to resist against even the simplest of demons. This much you should know!"

Li Qing Shan nodded: "The strength of humans lies in using tools." He clearly remembered in his previous life during his lessons on politics that his teacher mentioned about how the greatest difference between humans and animals lied in the invention and usage of tools. Even in this world of cultivation, this point remained the same.

Zhou Wen Bin's eyes shined as he said: "Well said. But do you truly feel the importance of tools? Such as the Wind Severing Blade at your waist, do you feel that it has truly increased your strength?"

Li Qing Shan subconsciously touched the Wind Severing Blade, and then slowly shook his head. Although the Wind Severing Blade was a good weapon, but for him, it was not essential, nor did it cause him to have a qualitative increase in strength.

Zhou Wen Bin said: "Because you have not really learned how to

use tools? Now this knife, to you, is merely like a beast's claw and you are only able to use it instinctively. Those who are able to use their weapons to conduct artistic swordplay in the outside world are actually only merely stronger than wild beasts. "

Li Qing Shan leaned forward, picked up the teapot and filled a cup of tea for Zhou Wen Bin: "Then please don't mind me asking, what can be regarded as true usage of tools?"

"Like this!" Zhou Wen Bin's eyes shined and a blade flew out from his sleeves. It rapidly swam around him, sometimes low and sometimes high, drawing a never-ending arc of light.

Under the afternoon sun, the blade reflected light frequently, causing the sides of the two to shine constantly.

The blade then rushed into the sky, piercing through the willow branches, causing the willow leaves to fall like rain. However, before this "rain" could fall, the blade then shimmered before it stabbed and caused the hundred willow leaves to be pinned to the bark of the tree.

Zhou Wen Bin then pointed in another direction, before the blade moved off again, skimming across the surface of the pool, just like a sharp pair of scissors, cutting the surface of the lake before disappearing into the water. In the next instant, the blade appeared from the duckweed on the shore and returned to the sleeves of Zhou Wen Bin.

Li Qing Shan stared at this scene until he became dizzy. If he did not turn into his demonic form, he would not have any way to resist this sword. He once saw at the Dragon Gate Sect Ancestral hall how fearsome a Flying Sword could be. However, that flying sword had no one manipulating it and only knew to go in a straightforward direction, enabling him to recognise that he had insufficient knowledge of the true power of Flying Swords.

Now, he could be considered to have finally understood that upon encountering a true Flying Sword, he did not have any

chance at blocking this kind of attack. Because without the restrictions of the human body, the agility of the Flying Sword surpassed even the nimblest of swordsmen.

It could only be imagined that, if one met this kind of Flying Sword as a form of assassination and was unable to ward it off in one strike, then it would be like a spirited snake as it snuck its way to piercing one's heart. One could end up not even seeing the enemy and lose the chance to fight the enemy to the death.

Unless you could resist the sharpness of the Flying Sword, or be faster than the Flying Sword, did you stand a chance against it. However, how many people could truly do such a thing? This was the true usage of tools. Humans were able to suppress the demons through this aspect.

He had seen this way of using tools in the hands of the Sword Palace Fei Long Elder. Zhou Wen Bin's sword in comparison to Elder Fei Long's sword was far worse. But because the gap in their strength was too large, he could only see the sword slashes as rain and the sword Qi as rainbows, resulting in destruction on the level of natural calamities.

Back then, his mind was filled with thoughts on that fearful overwhelming power and he had not really thought much on the exquisiteness and fearfulness of the Flying Sword, and was not as shocked as he was now. A reason that he was more shocked with regards to the Flying Sword now was the fact that he himself could also use tools in such a way.

Zhou Wen Bin said: "The so-called usage of tools, can be regarded to be more of a common saying. A more accurate phrasing would be "Equipment Drive". " Sword device are more common spiritual devices. In the world, there are thousands of spiritual devices, some can be used to kill enemies, some can be used to resist enemy attacks, and some can even be used to confuse the minds of others. To sum it up, there are thousands of ways to use items, but as long as you have enough True Qi, then you would no longer be limited

by your limbs and can use multiple spiritual devices at once and killing people will be like taking candy from a baby.

“And all this, requires you to open up the 4 meridians of ying and yang, balancing the path of ying yang. Then, you need to clear the paths to your meridians and open up the Ying Yang Qi Sea. There’s even a saying that only Qi Refining Practitioners that have opened up their Sea of Qi are considered true Qi Refining Practitioners that have entered the path of cultivation. Anyways, for a 6th Level Qi Refining Practitioner to kill a 5th Level Qi Refining Practitioner is extremely simple.

The implication was that, for a 1st Level Qi Refining Practitioner such as Qing Shan, he should not even consider his chances at winning. Even with body refining techniques at the side, he would not be a match for Zhuo Zhi Bo.

Li Qing Shan sincerely said: "No wonder. Thank you, my lord, for your advice, but the reason I so choose to stay behind is not because I do not know my limits."

The two then silently stared at one another, one firm and one in suspicion.

Zhou Wen Bin then said: "Since you insist, then I will not say much. If you need any help, you can go to the county office to find me, but you are Zhuo Zhi Bo’s subordinate after all, and I cannot flip on Zhuo Zhi Bo for you, so you should know your limits."

Li Qing Shan laughed: "Of course."

Li Qing Shan’s relaxed casual attitude made Zhou Wen Bin feel as if he had simply made a mistake. Could it be that this kid had some powerful background?

"I now have one thing that I wish to ask of my lord. May I know where one can learn the Equipment Drive technique?" Li Qing Shan was greatly moved by Zhou Wen Bin's show. He instantly recalled how he had found the small handle-less sword in Zhao

Liang Qing's Hundred Treasure Pouch and that it was Zhao Liang Qing's preparation for attaining the 6th Level of Qi Refining. Now that it fell into his hands, he would definitely have to put it to good use.

Zhou Wen Bin looked at him intensely: "Do you really think that the 6th Level of Qi Refining is so easy to breakthrough?"

Li Qing Shan said: "I will try my best." His eyes full of strong self-confidence, at least from a demons point of view, he has already reached this level.

Zhou Wen Bin did not doubt him, but rather, said: "Ordinary Equipment Drive techniques are well-known in the cultivation world. Teaching you this in advance is no issue."

Li Qing Shan curiously asked: "There are special Equipment Drive techniques?"

Zhou Wen Bin said: "The Hidden Sword Palace has its own unique Sword Drive techniques, not Equipment Drive, but Sword Drive. The Mysterious Ying Sect has its Ghost Manipulating Techniques, using ghosts as equipment. There are also Devilish paths that refine corpses to manipulate zombies. Every sect has its own Equipment Drive technique. I cannot know everything."

Mysterious Ying Sect, Ghost Manipulation Technique! Li Qing Shan was moved. Thinking back to the book that he got from the hands of the Witch Doctor back then, wasn't it the "Mysterious Ying Ghost Manipulation Technique"? These two definitely had some links between them. Perhaps clarifying the origin of the Witch Doctor would make Little An's past clearer. He immediately asked: "Where is the Mysterious Ying Sect?"

This was common knowledge that everyone had to know in the Qing Province. Zhou Wen Bin casually answered in a few sentences and did not notice the strange face of Li Qing Shan.

Li Qing Shan wrote down eight characters, "Extremely Southern

Land, Valley of Ten Thousand Ghosts," and for the first time learned about this superpower sect in Qing Province. However, without anymore information from Zhou Wen Bin, he did not ask any more questions regarding it.

His own strength was insufficient and was unable to travel to such a faraway place. Little An was unable to recall much and had not recovered his body of flesh. Underlying these numerous reasons, was Qing Shan's selfish desire to never let Little An leave his side! He did not want to be alone again!

Although it was ridiculous, but this man that could transform into an over two Zhang tall monster that could easily crush humans like ants, had a heart like that of ordinary folks in the sense that he hated being lonely.

So, for the first time, when he had the chance to find out more about Little An's circumstances, he lost his motivation to do so.

The sunlight was cut into pieces by the blade-like leaves of the willow tree, which sprinkled all over the body of the youth. He was not particularly handsome, but on his bronze chiselled face, there appeared a rare trace of doubt, but that was immediately resolved and he looked determined as ever to fulfil his promise and go with the flow.

Zhou Wen Bin then quickly taught him the techniques of Equipment Drive. The concept was not complicated, but it had strict requirements for one's cultivation. After opening the Sea of Qi, Qi Refining Practitioners still could not communicate with the Natural Spiritual Qi that easily. However, it was moving towards this direction as the practitioners began to be able to sense various types of items with spirits in them.

Of course, all things are spiritual. Even a flower or a blade of grass were of no exception. However, with greater spiritual Qi, the response would be stronger. Also, it's not like one could manipulate the flora to hurt the enemy. Qi Refining Practitioners



would choose a type of spiritual device and use their own body's True Qi to refine it over time. This would be done until one developed a connection with the spiritual device and could manipulate it without contact, as if converting one self to become a magnet to move steel.

Li Qing Shan expressed his gratitude. The more common-sense things were, the more they were of help to him. Because this was common knowledge to Qi Refining Practitioners, it would be an essential foundation to their knowledge. He was but of common birth. Without a teacher, nor a sect, he had no chance to undergo such systematic education.

Zhou Wen Bin caressed his beard and laughed: "Is this going to be just empty talk?"

Li Qing Shan was shocked, could it be that this person wanted to be bribed?

Zhou Wen Bin hinted: "You should have had a lot of harvest last night. Such as some silver?" Li Qing Shan's "borrowing" of the madam's treasure pouch did not miss the eyes of Zhou Wen Bin.

Li Qing Shan was stunned: "But you, a dignified magistrate, a 6th Level Qi Refining Practitioner, governing the lives of hundreds of thousands, actually want money from a poor boy like me?"

Zhou Wen Bin said: "Why are you so loud? I didn't even say I would take it off from you for free? Just because there are a lot of people, there are a lot of areas to spend money on. Those silver are useless in the hands of you. How about you give them to me and I exchange them with Qi Condensation Pills."

Li Qing Shan was surprised: "What for?" Letting him use silver to buy Qi Condensation Pills. He would definitely be willing to. Unless he was planning on spending the money to purchase a "little sister" to accompany him, silver was mainly useless to him.

However, for a 6th Level Qi Refining Expert like Zhou Wen Bin, it

was him who needed silver?

## Chapter 131: A spot in the darkness

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Zhou Wen Bin explained to Li Qing Shan that being the magistrate was not as easy as he thought. In order to obtain enough “support,” and let the people of Jia Ping City feel that he was a generous man of nobility, there were plenty of costs for him to cover, namely: the construction of general utility facilities, the implementation of public welfare facilities, the need to raise public wages as well as providing the wages for his group of aides who handle general affairs for him. This often leads to him spending more money than he receives.

Zhou Wen Bin gestured with both hands and bitterly laughed: “What a pitiful official I am. Not only do I not have any money for myself, I still have to think of ways to accumulate money.”

Li Qing Shan also felt that it was quite funny. In this era, although the “income disparity” was incredibly large, but for the common people, it was not necessarily a bad thing.

The Great Xia dynasty, from top to bottom, no matter how high-level officials are, they did not require tribunal silver from the people. However, they did not have to pay taxes to the main state as well. Even if they discovered gold, silver or iron ores, they would be left to the charge of the people on site.

This was not possible in any of the dynasties known to Li Qing Shan, yet, in here, this was happening. The perspectives of practitioners were different from ordinary people from the very beginning. If Zhou Wen Bin was willing to, he could squeeze the City of Jia Ping for tens of millions of silver, but that was meaningless.

Only one kind of mining vein belonged to the state, which was the Spirit Stone vein. Officials like Zhou Wen Bin and Zhuo Zhi Bo received their pay in terms of Spirit Stones.

Li Qing Shan took out hundreds of thousands of silvers from the

treasure pouch of the madam and gave it to Zhou Wen Bin.

Zhou Wen Bin said: "Aren't you going to ask me, how many Qi Condensation Pills can be exchanged for this?"

Li Qing Shan said: "I've always not been stingy. Of course, I also hope that others will be slightly more generous towards me."

Zhou Wen Bin handed over a small porcelain bottle, containing a total of twelve Qi Condensation Pills, to Li Qing Shan and said: "This is the first time, so it's at a discounted price. If you still have silver, you can continue to find me, but then it will be a hundred thousand silver for 2 pills. "

Li Qing Shan said: "That's fair." Thinking about how a Qi Condensation Pill was worth millions, he couldn't help but sigh. However, if they were sold to the rest of the world, there would definitely be plenty of people who were willing to spend a hundred thousand silver to purchase a single Qi Condensation Pill.

Li Qing Shan also handed over the account book from the madam to Zhou Wen Bin: "I wonder if there is any evidence of the dirty deeds of the pavilion in this?"

Li Qing Shan did not want to make his actions seem suspicious, thus he did not take it out on the first time they met. However, he thought back to the numerous girls still trapped in the basement of the pavilion and thought of a way to let Zhou Wen Bin check the building. As such, he would be able to save the girls in an outright manner, if not, they would simply starve to death during their confinement.

Zhou Wen Bin did not even look at it before he clapped his hands. Immediately, a servant came running over and brought the book to the office where it would be scrutinised over by the experts.

After a while, a man with an appearance of an expert appeared, who glanced at Li Qing Shan with surprise. Although the Eagle Wolf Guard was very good, an ordinary member did not qualify for

a meeting with his lord. He then bowed to Li Qing Shan before reporting to Zhou Wen Bin: "My lord, there seems to be many problems..."

Li Qing Shan looked at the pond and thought about wondered about how he should start. When Zhou Wen Bin and the "expert" finished speaking, he asked: "My lord, is this evidence enough to take down the pavilion?"

Zhou Wen Bin said: "Do you really think that with a single book, you can tear down the pavilion? You seem to be severely underestimating the power of their sect. The people I sent to the Fishing Village have returned. Qing Xiu's family are all dead. They cleaned up thoroughly after their misdeeds."

Li Qing Shan burst out: "These savages! With my lord as the official overseeing this, is there still a need to fear this sect?"

Zhou Wen Bin said: "I am not afraid, but helpless. These sects have their own roots and inheritance. Some large-scale sects have existed for even longer than the Great Xia Dynasty. When the Emperor was around, he could only pacify and promise to not harm their profits such that everyone could coexist peacefully. Afterwards, he established the Hundred School Courtyard so as to develop greater human talent to resist their power."

In short, they will not come to provoke Zhou Wen Bin on their own initiative while Zhou Wen Bin also does not want to provoke them. He was here mainly for his own cultivation, and not to really become a fair and just official who served at the beck and call of the people. No one could really task him to do any more than what he had already done.

Li Qing Shan thought to himself about how fortunate it was that he had already squished Zhao Liang Qing, or else it would be impossible for him to punish him through official channels.

"Thus, you should also be prepared to guard against the hidden plans of their sect. Sometimes, they may be even more terrible

than Zhuo Zhi Bo. Zhuo Zhi Bo is an Eagle Wolf Guard, so he has to consider your background, but the sect does not have such problems to consider. Most of the losses of the Eagle Wolf Guard is through disputes with these schools, and they are silently terminated. Even if it is an Eagle Wolf Guard Commander such as Zhuo Zhi Bo, or a magistrate like me, there are deaths that are left unclarified up till today.

Li Qing Shan was not too surprised. He witnessed such an instance early on. What status did Gu Yan Ying have? Yet, she was still not able to kill the Saint Mother of the White Lotus. Although she forced her to hide, she also lost a lot of men.

As for the White Wolf Guard under her command, they had at least undergone one round of Heavenly Tribulation and reached the realm of Foundation Establishment. In this Jia Ping City, even in the Clear River Prefecture, they were people that could get away with anything. The Hidden Sword Sect's Elder Fei Long did not even fear the authority of the Eagle Wolf Guard and even dared to kill the beloved pet of Lady You in front of Gu Yan Ying, fighting her even. It must be noted that Gu Yan Ying even had the Eagle God backing her. As such, the tenacity of these practitioner sects could be seen to be extraordinary.

He could not help but sigh: "No matter the times, it is strength that determines everything. Identity and authority will never be as practical as having the strength to backing it up."

Zhou Wen Bin said: "You have a map of the Qing Province. Let's have a look at it."

Li Qing Shan took out the map of the Qing Province to examine it.

Zhou Wen Bin stroked the map: "This really is good stuff." Countless lights appeared on the top, as if they were the stars in the night sky.

"On the top of this bright spot, there is the existence of the royal

court officials. Even 5th Level Qi Refining Practitioners will not dare to kill you under the watchful eyes of the public here. However, outside of these bright spots, there will be no such thing. There will only be strength. This, you must remember. As long as they have the chance, there will be always be people who dare to kill you for the items inside your Treasure Pouch. Your identity as an Eagle Wolf Guard may not only fail to serve as a deterrent, but also end up attracting more people to come and kill you. "

Li Qing Shan looked at the map of the Qing Province which he had seen many times. He now had a new understanding. Although the stars are bright and dense, they are far smaller than the vastness and darkness of the night sky. In those mountains and valleys, they are lawless lands. It becomes a stage where the demons dance wildly, and a battleground that practitioners kill on.

This kind of hint was more helpful than giving him a few more Qi Condensation Pills. This gave him a new understanding of his position. However, he did not feel any fear, rather, he felt enlightened.

He was still worried about if Zhuo Zhi Bo troubled him, how he could eradicate him so as to reduce the suspicion towards himself. But now, the land of darkness was extremely convenient for him. He could go on a killing spree there and then blame it on a strong practitioner or terrifying demon that walked on by.

Zhou Wen Bin saw that there was not a shred of fear on Li Qing Shan's face. That was an emotion that would definitely appear on the face of the orthodox practitioners. Even Zhou Wen Bin himself was no exception, thus he decided to stay in the light, to protect himself and keep a distance from the world of darkness.

He had to admit, that this young man was indeed different from ordinary people. He seemed to have a keen interest in fighting and chaos. However, he also seemed to not be a brainless brawling maniac, but rather a brave yet meticulous person in nature.

Maybe he was better suited to go to a major sect, and not the path of the Eagle Wolf Guard or the Hundred School Courtyard. Almost all the major sects would love this kind of disciple, whether it be a sect that defended the devilish path and fought against the just or a sect that maintained law and order. These all required a good fighter to be a great practitioner in their path.

In the eyes of ordinary people, practitioners seem to have transcended and not be plagued with world issues, with no need to be stained by the fumes and blood of fighting. They seemed to only need to chant their sutras daily, with no need to consume food at all, which would allow them to extend their longevity until they were forever young.

If one followed one's heart, who would be willing to risk fighting with others? Who did not want to carefully walk down the path of living forever? Taking the time used to develop Spiritual Devices and Spiritual Talismans to consume Medicinal Pills; taking the time spent learning techniques to focus on cultivating and seeking the Dao. However, this path was too difficult and very rushed.

Everyone needs Spiritual Pills and miracle medicine, but Spiritual Herbs are limited. Everyone needs a good cultivating cave, but they are also limited. Either one moves to the side and watches others enjoy these medicine, caves and a quick cultivating speed while one slowly grows old, ending up as an old pile of bones at home. Either that, or one had to go out and fight, compete and struggle for the resources one needed.

Not only does one have to fight with the heavens, one also has to fight with others.

Although the world is mainly fair and everyone is harmonious. How could those demons and ghosts hidden in the dark not want to recover their superiority and govern the Nine Provinces. In that piece of lawless wilderness, how many sects disappeared? Just following the most simple and primitive law, the strong would survive, the weak would perish.



Hidden Sword Palace and Mysterious Ying Sect, one rode swords, one manipulated ghosts. They may not be sects that are the most adept at cultivating, but they have their own advantages, and going by this law, they survived.

Li Qing Shan kept the Qing Province map and said, "Since I have already offended people, it doesn't really matter if I make them suffer a bit more, does it? Anyways, wouldn't it be such a pity to not use my identity to offend them when I could?"

Zhou Wen Bin knew that Li Qing Shan's public execution of the pavilion's personnel would make it nigh impossible for him to reconcile with them. Thinking about his young, brash nature, and how his hatred had probably not subsided yet, he said "Okay, I'll give you more than a dozen runners. Although this book can't topple them, it should be enough to get them to spit out some silver when you pressure them."

At this time, a manager came to report: "My lord, a fat man has appeared by the court doors requesting to meet you. He said he is a lieutenant in Jia Ping City. These are his documents."

Zhou Wen Bin smiled and said: "It seems that your old boss has arrived."

Li Qing Shan also laughed: "In the city, the law and order of the country is the magistrate's official duty. Is it not better for Lord Ye to bring people there as compared to myself?"

Zhou Wen Bin waved his hand and said, "You go and tell him. I want to start cultivating. Let him see me tomorrow." Obviously, he did not pay much heed to Ye Da Chuan, a normal person. This was simply a means of giving the prefect some face. Just giving him some silver would suffice.

Li Qing Shan came to the front door and saw Ye Dachuan with his expert, pointing around: "Look, this is the big city! It is not the same! Although it is worse than the Clear River Prefecture, it is better than Qing Yang that shitty place!" The expert was also

showing a face of surprise and happiness at the side, for he had at least finally felt like he earned something from following this fatty for so long.

"Lord Ye, I haven't seen you for quite a few days. How have you been doing?"

Ye Da Chuan turned around and saw Li Qing Shan in the Eagle Wolf Guard clothing. Although he knew Qing Shan had taken up such a position, he still could not help but be surprised: "You ... you really ... .."

Li Qing Shan smiled slightly: "I have a great amount of wealth to share with you! Are you in or what?"

# Chapter 132: The clouds disperse and the rain stops

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How could Ye Da Chuan refuse to do so? He couldn't help but agree! Taking Li Qing Shan's hand, he said: "You are my lucky star! No, my benefactor!", while remembering that Li Qing Shan had a completely different identity as of now.

Li Qing Shan said: "How about Protector Yan and the rest of them?"

Ye Da Chuan said: "They returned to the Iron Fist Gate to rest. Jia Ping's City Iron Fist Gate mentioned that they would come to visit you at night. I did not expect to be the one that met you first instead."

More than a dozen elite soldiers came behind Li Qing Shan: "Lord Li!"

Li Qing Shan laughed: "This is your Lord Ye!"

"Lord Ye!"

Standing in front of the pavilion, Ye Da Chuan was thrilled. On the first day of arriving in Jia Ping City, he was visiting the largest and most luxurious brothel?

Li Qing Shan said: "Lord Ye, do not forget, today we are looking for trouble."

Ye Da Chuan said: "I can't forget, I can't forget! Squeezing them of their money is the business we are here for!" He then righteously ordered: "Rush in and clean up this lewd place!"

"Nuo!" A crowd of elite soldiers rushed in like wolves, shocking the group of people in the pavilion. When the guards came out and saw Li Qing Shan, their "unlucky star", who dared to go up ahead!

Ye Da Chuan feigned his authority as he condescendingly asked: "Where's your boss? Huh?"

A girl worriedly replied, "We also don't know!"

Ye Da Chuan: "Search all of them for me!"

Li Qing Shan stood by and watched the soldiers as they turned the building inside out. He then whispered in Ye Da Chuan's ear: "It seems that the ones involved have already run away. Will there be any hidden treasure storage just like in the Black Wind Valleys?"

When the treasure storage was mentioned, Ye Da Chuan's eyes lighted up at once. "Search for their basements!" With a keen intuition for money, without waiting for Li Qing Shan's reminder, he found the switch a moment later and opened the door to the underground palace.

Ye Da Chuan looked at the black hole-like entrance of the underground palace and felt partially afraid. However, he could not hold back his desire for treasure. He first ordered the soldiers to enter, before dragging Li Qing Shan to come along with him.

Sure enough, they quickly found the detained women, clear proof of the pavilion's crimes. However, Zhao Liang Qing and Fu Rong had disappeared, clearly fleeing from their crimes.

Ye Da Chuan did not disappoint. Although Li Qing Shan took the treasure pouch, there were still many gold and silver accessories in the underground palace. Such jewellery were also quite a fortune.

"Congratulations to Lord Ye! You just arrived in Jia Ping City and made such a great contribution!" Li Qing Shan smiled and looked up at the statue of the Angelic Woman at the roof, before he casually tossed his Wind Severing Knife, scraping against the nose of one of the pavilion's guard before it stuck to the door.

"As long as we don't clarify things today, no one is allowed to leave. Or else, they'll be executed without mercy" Zhao Liang Qing certainly would not personally commit himself to matters like kidnapping women. All the guard in the pavilion definitely had a hand in these matters.

"What, Zhao Liang Qing is gone?" Zhuo Zhi Bo got up and looked at Ge Jian who had come to report.

Ge Jian said: "Yes, today Li Qing Shan took out several accounting books and asked for a permit from Zhou Wen Bin before he brought soldiers to the pavilion. As a result, not only did they not find Zhao Liang Qing and Fu Rong, they also found those women who were kidnapped in the underground palace. After being questioned by Zhou Wen Bin, Zhao Liang Qing has been judged as guilty. Zhou Wen Bin has also issued a wanted poster for Zhao Liang Qing and has seized all property under the pavilion for investigation.

Zhuo Zhi Bo slowly sat down. There was something weird about this matter. As long as Zhao Liang Qing stays put, there would always be a time when he could rise up again, and no one would be able to catch any evidence of his crimes. Was it possible that he returned to his sect to report as well as discuss about future strategies, resulting in Li Qing Shan having the opportunity to take advantage of the weakness of the pavilion without him?

He did not understand and for a moment, he also suspected that Zhao Liang Qing was dead, but he immediately dismissed this idea. Who could kill Zhao Liang Qing? Zhao Liang Qing was already at the pinnacle of the 5th Level of Qi Refining and was just a step away from the 6th Level. The only people that were able to kill him in the entire Jia Ping City was Zhou Wen Bin and himself. However, Zhou Wen Bin would definitely not take such a risk to become enemies with the pavilion.

Unless it was Li Qing Shan, then he would dare to take such daring actions. But even if one kept thinking about it, Li Qing Shan was only at the First Level of Qi Refining. He was not Zhao Liang Qing's opponent of.

Qian Rong was deep in thought. Li Qing Shan was simple a catastrophe in disguise. It was only last night that a trap was set for him in the pavilion and today, the pavilion collapsed.

Zhou Wen Bin also did not expect that him randomly sending someone to harass him would cause such a result. The pavilion was an empty shell of itself. Those women were crying as they recalled their experiences, exposing the barbaric actions of the pavilion, pointing towards many of the guards as the ones responsible, with Zhao Liang Qing and Fu Rong as the leader of these criminal acts.

There was no need to report to the Clear River Prefecture. Zhou Wen Bin's power in Jia Ping was almost on the level of princes. With a single order, more than a dozen heads were chopped, clean and swift. Dozens of people were sent down to the big prison, and wanted posters were sent out. Finally, he wrote a report to send up to the Clear River Prefecture, which allowed the higher ups to question their sect, "Your disciples dared to do these kinds of things, you should at least explain yourself."

Since it was under the rule of the Great Xia Dynasty, this had to be subject to the jurisdiction of the law. Even at this time, even the sect could only excommunicate Zhao Liang Qing and the rest to clear them of any relations with them.

Zhou Wen Bin was very quick and sharp. He spent only one afternoon, causing Li Qing Shan to be nothing short of awe: "My lord has great means!"

Zhou Wen Bin cleared the surroundings and whispered: "You tell me honestly, is this your deed?"

Li Qing Shan said: "If I really had this strength then that would be great."

Zhou Wen Bin watched for a while and saw that Li Qing Shan had no discrepancies from the usual on his face. It was originally just a spark of a thought, but he felt that this matter was definitely related to Li Qing Shan. Patting his shoulder, he said "Well, your luck isn't bad."

At this time, Qian Rong and Diao Fei also came to the county to

report to Zhou Wen Bin.

Qian Rong Zheng resumed her laughter: "Last night, you were awe-inspiring. You guys are truly bad. Since we came together, why didn't you call me?"

Diao Fei began to understand the conflict between Li Qing Shan and Zhuo Zhi Bo, and he did not dare to offend Li Qing Shan nor did he dare to applaud him. He simply gave a perfunctory salute.

Li Qing Shan smiled, too lazy to deal with them. He said his goodbyes to Zhou Wen Bin and left with Ye Da Chuan by his side, dragging him to find Yan Song to celebrate with a drink.

Diao Fei cried behind him: "Qing Shan, wait."

Li Qing Shan turned his head and said: "What?"

Yu Fei actually felt a jump in his heart. This young boy actually made him faintly afraid. But after all, he had been through experiences of various troubles, so he took a deep breath, and immediately adjusted his emotions. He was not a trash that did not undergo actual combat like the madam. He did not believe that with his 3rd Level of Qi Refining that he would not be Li Qing Shan's match if they actually fought.

"From tomorrow onwards, we will carry out the trial tasks together. Shall we sit down and discuss this evening?"

Li Qing Shan said: "We're together? Trial tasks?" He was not interested in being with the two.

Zhou Wen Bin explained: "This is the rule of the Eagle Wolf Guard. After joining the Eagle Wolf Guard, there are several trial missions to complete to be considered as truly qualified. Then, you will go to the Clear River Prefecture and meet with the two leaders. You are really only just getting started. There are very few people that get kicked out during the trials. Often, they just go through the procedures, but if you do not accept it, Zhuo Zhi Bo has reason to fire you."

Li Qing Shan understood that there were institutional rules within the system and stood firm and said, "Well, discussing it seems ok." He was curious about what kind of tasks Zhuo Zhi Bo would give them.

Routinely inquiring of their origin: "Ancient Wind City, Qian family." This kind of small would naturally not meet Zhou Wen Bin's eyes, but when asking about the origin of Diao Fei, he was just a little surprised : "Qing Teng Shan? Your master is Qing Teng Shan?"

"Yes!"

"You joined the Eagle Wolf Guard. Did your master agree?" The reason why Zhou Wen Bin asked this question is because families and schools were different. Families were in cities, under the rule of the Dynasty, and they were generally willing to let their people join the court. The sects were mostly set in the mountains, and they have a set of rules. Most of them were not willing to let their disciples become imperial dogs.

Diao Fei's face became dark, and his eyes looked high up ahead.

Zhou Wen Bin no longer asked any more questions as he continued to write: "You can go!"

Out of the gates of the county, Ye Da Chuan said: "You are all young heroes of the Eagle Wolf Guard, and as the official Ye Da Chuan, who is the county magistrate of the county, I would like to invite you all to have a few drinks together?"

Qian Rong Zheng and Diao Fei both looked to Li Qing Shan and Li Qing Shan said: "Let's go!" The duo nodded.

The four walked on the street. Even in the evening, the streets are still crowded with people. However, when they saw that Li Qing Shan and the other two in their attire, they evaded them. Even those in horse carriages would stop and give way, not wanting to disturb them.



Li Qing Shan only now knew the prestige his Eagle Wolf Guard uniform had. He arrived at the restaurant that Ye Da Chuan and Yan Song agreed meet at and entered the upper floors. Yan Song and Li Long had already waited there to meet Li Qing Shan. Seeing that he arrived, they both stood up: "Qing Shan, you arrived so quickly!"

Li Qing Shan made a brief introduction for both parties. Yan Song said: "Turns out they are all the disciples of prestigious sects. It is nice to meet you all." However, he was faintly surprised. Amongst the three, Li Qing Shan had the weakest cultivation and the shallowest origin, yet it seemed that he was the leader amongst them and they had no qualms with that.

Diao Fei and Qian Rong Zheng said a few perfunctory lines. Based on their cultivation and identity, they did not need to take Yan Song too seriously.

After several cups of wine, Yan Song asked how Li Qing Shan's "Xian Tian Qi Refining Scripture" went.

Li Qing Shan said: "I just arrived at the 3rd stage. If I want to break through to the 4th stage, I believe I will need more time."

Yan Song was taken aback. "Xian Tian Qi Refining Scripture" was more difficult the more one cultivated it. Li Qing Shan quickly comprehending the first stage and breaking through to the second was of no surprise to him. However, after not seeing him for only a few days, he had broken through to the 3rd stage already. This speed was indeed shocking: "Looking back, it only took you about 7 or 8 days. I thought that Qing Shan your cultivation speed was just normal. However, I can't be more wrong."

"What! Seven or eight days?" Diao Fei and Qian Rong Zhen were both shocked. They only just learned that Li Qing Shan's official time since he began to refine qi was not even 10 days. He actually cultivated the "Xian Tian Qi Refining Scripture" to the third stage, which was almost like a legendary cultivating genius.

Li Qing Shan smiled slightly and did not explain. Only the heavens knew how many Qi Condensation Pills he had eaten, and there was even a sacred ring left behind by a golden core expert for him to refine his true qi. If he had not achieved this level of result, then his innate qualities would surely be too trashy.

# Chapter 133: Break through to the second level!

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When Yan Song heard of what Li Qing Shan did during these past two days, he was beyond shocked. The sect behind the pavilion was an enormous organisation and was top in the ranks of sects even in the entire Clear River Prefecture. Families and martial groups such as the Qing Teng Mountain or the Qian family could not compare with it, let alone the Iron Fist Sect.

The pavilion sect's main building was in the Clear River Prefecture, which was where the nobility of the Clear River area resided in. The connections that it had were vast and great. Even the Vice-leader of the Eagle Wolf Guard was noted to frequently visit that establishment and was found to be very familiar with the sect master.

Li Qing Shan was simply fearless for not just offending, but also destroying the pavilion the moment he arrived in Jia Ping City.

Li Qing Shan said: "I just wanted to mete out justice." He subconsciously pressed the handle of his wind severing knife at his waist, as he already knew where the "justice" was truly at.

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There was no moon that night, and in the dead of night, in a dark house, Li Qing Shan sat cross-legged with his eyes closed.

True Qi was circulating in his body endlessly, following the "Xian Tian Qi Refining Scripture" 3rd level instructions as it flowed rounds in his body. Even if there were Qi Condensation Pills to help him, the increase seemed marginal.

The jade ring was on his fingers. In the darkness, it had no strange appearances, but it remained unresponsive to the True Qi that Li Qing Shan infused into it.

He seemed to be guarding a vast treasure vault, but he was not

allowed to enter. He could only walk around outside, wondering what it contained inside.

He could hold on to it, but the treasures and collection of a golden core expert gave him temptations that he could not resist. Before he parted, the Green Ox even said: "I left you something inside."

The Green Ox was a being that could casually teach Little An a terrifying technique like the "Face of the Undead". What kind of treasure could he have left behind for him to mention it so importantly to Qing Shan?

A legendary artifact? A technique that could overturn the oceans? A miraculous pill that could allow on to soar beyond the Nine Heavens upon consumption?

He did not dare to think of it much during his everyday life, but once he thought about it he felt increasingly curious. He sighed in his heart: "Brother Ox oh Brother Ox, what did you want to give me? Why not just pass it to me directly? Why do you have to trouble me so? Also, for you to keep it in such a manner that I have to use human methods to open this jade ring... In the beginning, when you wanted me to demonify, then you should continue to use such demonic means no?"

In spite of how he felt, he also felt that this move by the Green Ox must have its own profound meaning. The Green Ox certainly expected that he would return to the human world as a human being. The reason he gave him such a test was that he wanted him to make achievements as a human in his cultivation?

Since he didn't understand it, then he didn't plan to think too much about it. He needed his identity as a human. For the two days since he arrived in Jia Ping City, he easily obtained up to a hundred Qi Condensation Pills. With his own cultivation strengthening, he would be able to get medicinal pills more easily and he would have more assurances for his own safety.

After all, he cannot transform himself before other people. Most of the time, he has to rely on his Qi Refining Cultivation. However, the first level of Qi Refining was simply too weak.

Suddenly he stopped cultivating. He was slowly grasping the essence of the fourth level of the “Xian Tian Qi Refining Scripture”, with each and every sentence becoming clearer and clearer.

He was trying to open the “Yang Heel Vessel”<sup>\*</sup> of the Eight Wonder Meridians to break through the first level of Qi Refining to reach the second level of Qi Refining. This is the first meridian he will attempt to open, and it could be said that this would be his first step into the path of Qi Refining. It should be noted that what he was about to do had a very different meaning than that of the first 3 levels of the “Xian Tian Qi Refining Scripture”.

True Qi was flowing into his left leg and sinking to the ankle where the “Shen Acupoint” was at, where the entrance of the “Yang Heel Vessel” was positioned on. To open up the “Yang Heel Vessel”, he needed to first enter through this point.

He no longer sat cross-legged on the bed and changed to a strange posture instead. He leaned forward and stretched his left leg, like he was in some kind of a yoga pose.

Little An had been kneeling beside the bed and concentrated on reading the large pile of sutras that Li Qing Shan brought back to him. At this time, he put down his books and looked at Li Qing Shan with concern.

What Li Qing Shan wanted to do was knock on the entrance!

True Qi rushed to the Shen Acupoint like water. However, the door remained tightly shut, with no intention of opening for even the slightest moment, let alone to allow him to open the Vessel path.

He knew that the accumulation of his own True Qi was too little

and that his own reserves of True Qi had not even reached the peak of a 1st level Qi Refining Warrior. Normally, one would continuously accumulate True Qi until there was an excess, which would require months of work. Once one's True Qi was able to form a large river, it would be able to run down and squash any obstacles to his cultivation.

Yet, what he was trying to do now was using his little stream to take down the dam in the way. The difficulty was an extreme high. However, "Ten Thousand Years are too long, and one only seeks one night" (basically means, Seize the moment!) He wanted to give it a try and do his best before he was willing to give up. He crushed a Qi Condensation pill in his mouth to replenish his True Qi in the meantime.

After trying many times, there was still no gain. He finally stopped but not because he wanted to give up. Instead, he became more and more conscientious in his manipulation of True Qi. He continued to condense his True Qi, condensing the stream into ice, before converting it into spears. By then, it had already shrunk in size by over a hundred times, yet at the same time, it was also denser by over a hundred times.

Then, when it was no longer able to condense any more, the ice spears charged forth towards the dam with an unstoppable momentum.

Feeling a sudden pain in the soles of his feet, Li Qing Shan disregarded the pain. Instead, he revealed a color of surprise on his face. This time, the True Qi was no longer blocked and it had managed to deeply pierce into the Shen Acupoint. Under his stimulation, it began to slowly inch in difficultly.

His body made a sound akin to that of a light knock, as the dam that blocked the stream before had now been penetrated and True Qi began to flow in endlessly into the "Yang Heel Vessel".

In his body, there was a light that appeared, which was akin to

the first star that lit up in the boundless universe.

However, before Li Qing Shan could be happy, his True Qi had hit another obstacle. It was the Bo Shen Acupoint also located near his heel.

The True Qi was smashed to smithereens and could no longer condense. Under the pressure of the Yang Heel Vessel, it was slowly being squeezed out.

His opening of vessels failed!

Even the perforated Shen Acupoint began to close up.

Li Qing Shan sucked in a deep breath. On that night he was praised to be a true cultivating genius by Yan Song for who knew how many times. However, he could not even open up the first Vessel he required. Ascending to the second level of Qi Refining was already so difficult. He now knew that the path of Qi Refining was not so easy as well.

Comparatively speaking, the cultivation of demons was much more brainless. All they had to do was swallow the Spiritual Qi of the Heaven and Earth, or eat spiritual plants and medicine, so as to strengthen their Demonic Qi. Once it hit a certain level, it would naturally condense to form a Demon Core. Following which their cultivation would be the same as before, where they would just endlessly guide Demonic Qi into their Demon Core. Once it hit a certain level, the heavenly thunder would descend and if one managed to survive it, one would become a Demon General whereas if one did not, one would just become a pile of ash. Simple and clean.

Most of the demons started off as beasts, even as plants. They all relied on their instincts to cultivate. If they required intelligence and ideas, then there would not be any demons in this world.

However, although it was simple, it required a lot of time. Not to mention plants, even a normal beast in the wild needed at least a

hundred years to become a Demon General. And that was provided it had been able to eat spiritual plants such as the Spiritual Ginseng often, then it had a bit of a chance to do so. If not, usual beasts would require at least 3 to 5 hundred years to do so, and these were plenty all around.

The meridian acupuncture points, which are gifted by the heavens to the humans, are also shortcuts discovered by humans. However, no matter how good a shortcut that it, it must be taken step by step.

For people like Li Qing Shan that only started refining qi for a few days and yet wanted to open up his meridians, yet, sighing and feeling that refining qi was not easy after failure would simply appear unreasonable to other practitioners if they knew about it.

However, Li Qing Shan was not discouraged. He grabbed a Qi Condensation Pill and put it into his mouth. He did not swallow it, and then attempted to break through again.

With his first experience, when he broke through the Shen Acupoint again, it was much easier. After breaking through the Shen Acupoint, he did not dare to be distracted. Biting downwards, he crushed the pill in his mouth to replenish his True Qi as he attempted to break through the next barrier.

Four hours later, he had consumed 25 Qi Condensation Pills and attempted to break through 13 times. His highest achievement was breaking through 3 of the acupoints on his leg, the Shen, Bo Shen and Fu Yang acupoints. However, when the True Qi flowed up his left leg, the flowing stream stopped at the Ji Liao acupoint at his crotch.

Once it is blocked, the True Qi would flow backwards just like a boat in reverse currents. The acupoints that were broken through before would then close up again. Along the Yang Heel Vessel, there were a total of 12 acupoints. If it were an ordinary Qi Refining Practitioner, he could probably only give up now.



Li Qing Shan was evidently indifferent to this. Anyways, the medicinal power that he had not been able to digest were all taken advantaged of by the demon core. The demon core was not wasteful or picky and he did not have to worry about wastage or the possibilities of dangers from the accumulation of medicinal power. This let Li Qing Shan experiment in a more reckless fashion for if he succeeded it would be a good thing, but if he did not there would be nothing bad about it.

And he felt that as long as the acupoints were perforated through before, even if they closed up again, it would be slightly easier to open them up next time. Along this process, Li Qing Shan had also accumulated quite a bit of experience and had greater understanding of the 4th level of the “Xian Tian Qi Refining Scripture”.

Li Qing Shan considered for a moment before taking out another medicinal pill. It was as if it had just hit dawn and the pill resembled the clear dewdrops stuck on the flower petals. Rather than a Qi Condensation Pill, it was the Dewdrop Pill he had acquired from Diao Fei. This was what Diao Fei was keeping for himself to reach the 4th level of Qi Refining. To use it to break through to the second level of Qi Refining was wasteful, but for a person with no reserves like Li Qing Shan, it was somehow appropriate.

However, if he failed to break through upon eating it, he would have wasted a pill of great quality.

Without too much hesitation, Li Qing Shan decided to take a gamble.

When the Dewdrop pill slid into his abdomen from the throat, Li Qing Shan clearly felt its cool and rounded texture. Yet, as soon as it entered his abdomen, it turned into a stirring flood.

When the torrents merged into his True Qi, it immediately merged with the stream in his body, which caused it to become a

rampaging river which broke past his Shen, Bo Shen and Fu Yang acupoints with almost no obstruction. Only after breaking through the Ju Liao acupoint and reaching his shoulder to reach the Yu Shu acupoint did it meet slight resistance.

However, Li Qing Shan had already gathered all his focus, how could he be stopped here? The three acupoints on his shoulders were all broken through subsequently as well.

At this time, there appeared to be some insufficiencies in his True Qi, but he had already made preparations long ago. Consuming one Qi Condensation Pill after another, he managed to take this momentum to push his True Qi to break through another 4 acupoints on his face: Di Cang, Ju Liao, Cheng Qi and Qing Ming acupoints respectively.

The True Qi had already come very close to the brain and now required extreme caution when handling it. Plenty of Qi Refining experts lost control of their True Qi at this moment and caused it to rush towards the brain which resulted in them becoming retarded. Li Qing Shan obviously did not want such a result.

Up till now, there was no danger as he broke through the acupoints, and within his body, 11 points lit up, like the stars in a dark universe. A dim line connected these points as if it were a constellation.

The last point on the constellation was located at the Feng Chi acupoint behind his brain. As long as he managed to open up this acupoint, then he would have succeeded in opening up his Yang Heel Vessel and would have opened up a path for True Qi to circulate in his body, which was the so called 2nd Level Qi Refining level.

However, he had almost no True Qi left, and the medicinal powers from Qi Condensation Pills were not able to replenish his True Qi from such a distance. It was like an army that was broken off from its supply troops, which would soon fall into chaos and

doom.

He only felt extreme exhaustion, as if he had undergone a very difficult journey up till now. He could clearly see the end point, yet he was unable to take another step. As long as the True Qi struck the Feng Chi acupoint, then that would be the moment that his previous efforts would go to waste. However, he was not able to stop the True Qi from going onwards.

Was he going to fail?